THE GREATEST BLUNDERS OF WORLD WAR II

How Errors Mistakes & Blunders Determined Victory or Defeat

Horace Edward Henderson

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Writer's Showcase
New York Lincoln Shanghai

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SECOND PRINTING 2002

Writer's Showcase
an imprint of iUniverse, Inc.

For information address:
iUniverse
2021 Pine Lake Road, Suite 100
Lincoln, NE 68512
www.iuniverse.com

ISBN: 0-595-16267-3

Printed in the United States of America

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FOREWORD

We were still surrounded by the bodies and debris of the invasion when the first religious service was held on Omaha Beach shortly after D-Day. While several hundred of us thanked God for our survival, and prayed for those who had been lost, I believed that I must have been saved for some purpose. So I promised God that if I could get through the war safely, I would try to do everything I could to help prevent such a terrible tragedy from ever happening again.

When I returned home from the war I began to read and study everything I could find trying to understand how such a horrific catastrophe could take place. So this book represents nearly a lifetime of research as to why World War II occurred and how the evil, ego, mistakes and failures of world leaders resulted in mankind's darkest hour. Winston Churchill said that history is the record of "the crimes, follies, and miseries of men," but it can also be an account of the brave deeds and noble sacrifices which have advanced ideals and struggles for a better world. While we must continue to honor those who gave their all to preserve and enlarge a more civilized society, we must also recognize that if there is to be a peaceful and progressive future for mankind, we must seek to avoid the errors, the mistakes, and the blunders which have brought upon the world such great misery in the past.

It has also been said that "history is a pragmatic pursuit constantly changed by new views of old facts as interpreted by the fallibility and prejudices of men." Still, it seems unfair to use the resources and the perspective of a relatively peaceful present to judge the decisions and actions taken under the desperate pressure of international crisis and military conflict. But, as author R.W. Thompson has so aptly written, "if we do not seek to know and to challenge the truths and falsehoods of our times, we mock the past...and undermine the future." Thus the major emphasis of this volume has been based on the accounts and conclusions of many noted authors and historians concerning the important political and

military mistakes and blunders that were a significant impact upon the conduct and the outcome of the most disastrous conflict in world history.

The focus of this work concentrates on Europe where the major struggle was centered and where the ultimate outcome was to be determined. While many errors and blunders occurred in the struggle with Japan, there was never any doubt that Japan would be defeated once America could direct the full force of its powerful resources to the war in the Pacific. Generally, once America's massive military assets were committed to the worldwide struggle, the restoration of world peace should have been assured. And had there been fewer mistakes and blunders committed by the Allies, the conflict would have ended earlier, casualties and suffering would have been greatly reduced, disastrous political consequences would not have occurred, and the prospect of future peace and security for mankind could have been greatly advanced.

Lastly, it is the fervent hope of the author that this endeavor will successfully contribute to a better public understanding of the political and military conditions and actions which were responsible for the tragedy of the Second World War, such as: how marginal the outcome of the struggle became due to errors, mistakes and blunders on both sides; why so many millions of human beings unnecessarily suffered and died; how mankind continued to fail so miserably to prevent wars and to preserve the peace; and finally, what must be done to make a practical and enforceable world peace become a reality before much of mankind and civilization is destroyed by the ever-present threat of mass destruction.

INTRODUCTION

World War II was the greatest catastrophe in history and brought more violence, suffering and death to humanity than the world had ever known. More human beings were slaughtered in the vicious and brutal struggle than in all previous wars and never was the existence of civilized society so fatally threatened and so narrowly saved. The consequences of the desperate struggle for the future destiny of mankind was so disastrous and destructive that, more than a half century later, it continues to affect the life of every person on earth. The brutal assault of terror, suffering, death and devastation that was so aggressively and viciously inflicted by Germany, Italy and Japan upon hundreds of millions of innocent people throughout the world, can never be justified nor forgotten!

Fortunately, most of the facts as to what actually occurred in the protracted worldwide conflict are now known. Today it is possible, to a more realistic and objective degree, to examine the political and strategical considerations which resulted in history's greatest tragedy. And, in this age of fear over the constant threat of nuclear war and terrorism, with national emergency preparations now involving the stocking-up of body bags in our major communities, when the possibility of massive worldwide death and destruction practically threatens every human being every day, it is imperative that every citizen everywhere does whatever he or she can to prevent an even greater catastrophe in the future. Obviously, the survival of civilization and the welfare of mankind will be determined largely by how well the errors of the past are recognized and understood in order that we may attempt to insure that they shall never be repeated.

This book attempts to provide a comprehensive account of the major errors, mistakes and blunders which occurred before and during World War II. A vast number of sources were compiled for the inclusion of political and strategical events with important influence upon the outcome of this horrible and desperate struggle. While many of the cited incidents and issues still remain controversial, the ultimate conclusion is inescapable—that World War II demonstrated that

freedom and democracy barely prevailed over brutal aggression, slavery and liquidation—and a civilized free society can not possibly survive an even greater and more horrible worldwide cataclysm in the future.

The greatest possible challenge to every one of us today is to help find the practical way to avoid an atomic catastrophe and to preserve world peace. It must be recognized that in today's world of international interdependence and globalization, under the ever-present threat of nuclear weapons and mass destruction, world leaders are responsible and accountable to all of humanity, as well as to their countrymen, for what they do as well as for what they fail to do. According to veteran American diplomat George Kennan, "A nation which excuses its own failures by the sacred untouchableness of its own habits (and prejudices) can excuse itself into complete disaster. The margin in which it is given to us to commit blunders has been drastically narrowed."

It is well-known that the most difficult thing for man to do is to admit his mistakes. He excuses his errors just as he defends his honor. Public standards and prevailing values must be raised so that an admission of error becomes an act of honor, instead of a mark of shame. Unfortunately, there will always be demagogues and dictators, but the future of mankind also faces great danger when unauthorized and unaccountable politicians, influenced by personal ambitions, hatred, deceit, or the lust for power, are permitted to arbitrarily determine the fate of mankind and the course of history. Our recent record of war and violence has horrifyingly demonstrated that the excesses of nationalistic ambitions, military aggression, and acts of terrorism can only be effectively restrained by the enactment and enforcement of international law.

As this account reveals, it is a fact that Adolf Hitler lost World War II because of his blunders, and the Allies and Russia won the war in spite of their blunders due largely to an abundance of manpower and resources. Providentially, the war was finally won by the noble sacrifice and heroic struggle of both the military and civilians against the most aggressive and violent evil in world history. Mercifully aided by America's manpower and materiel at the critical time as in World War I, and with the substantial help of the decisive blunders of their enemies, the valiant armed forces and people of the United States, Great Britain, Russia and other allies finally prevailed in the total defeat of the dictatorial powers of Germany, Italy and Japan.

However, mankind paid a horrific price not only to obtain another opportunity to establish and to preserve world peace, but to learn that huge areas of civilization will not survive another worldwide conflict. Not only because of the vast destructive power of atomic, biological and chemical weapons, but because humankind cannot outlive the greed and the evil, and the mistakes and the failures of those whose misuse of power has not been effectively limited and controlled by the rule of law.

So what is the reality of the hope for world peace? In 1953 as national president of the US Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees), the author asked President Dwight Eisenhower what was the most important thing that young people could do for world peace? He replied that it takes a long time to change the values and attitudes of people and nations, but that national leadership often changes. Therefore, he said, the most practical way to bring about progressive change and to solve the world's most pressing problems lies in the development of enlightened leadership among young people throughout the world.

Of these things we can be sure—that each of us can make a difference, that war is never inevitable, and that world peace is not only possible—it is the only alternative to mass destruction!

Chapter 1

The Versailles Peace Treaty

The Peace Conference at Paris in 1919 was convened for the execution of a treaty which would establish the terms for ending World War I and to re-establish peaceful relations between the adversaries. But unfortunately, it became the greatest blunder in human history. It not only tragically failed to establish peace in Europe, to make the world safe for democracy and to banish the institution of war for the future, it actually became the cause which created the conditions which brought about the world's most disastrous conflict—World War II.

The first worldwide war had been locked in a desperate struggle for four years and it had consumed the finest young manhood of Europe. Described as "an inferno of hate and brutality," military casualties included ten million killed and twenty-one million wounded, and vast death, suffering and destruction was inflicted upon much of mankind. The insane and vicious slaughter had arisen from the excessive pride, greed and vengeance of vain monarchs who sacrificed millions of human beings in savage and unjustified warfare. Although the noble "war to end all wars" and "the crusade to save democracy" finally managed to stop the German conquest of Western Europe, world leaders proved to be incapable of doing little more than making the public anger even worse over the massive slaughter which eventually led the masses to demand their rights to be free and to govern themselves. Consequently, the pressure for human rights increased throughout Europe, monarchies were overthrown, ruling classes became powerless, new democratic governments were elected in most countries, and the fear of Communist uprisings spread across the continent. It soon became apparent that turbulent times lay ahead under the threat of social and military revolution.

Today most historians contend that not only Germany but numerous other countries in Europe were responsible for the beginning of the Great War. At the

time, Europe was described "as a cauldron of competitive excesses with imperialist rivalries, rampant nationalism, colonial ambitions, and territorial claims being manipulated with monarchial chauvinism." Clearly, Europe had become divided into hostile powers which created much tension and great danger to the prospect of a peaceful Europe. It became an extremely complex and volatile state of affairs, and while none of the states wanted war, conflict and tragic consequences were inevitable from "the prevalence of armed competitive pursuit of national dominance." Unquestionably, complicated and conflicting alliances, as well as the arms race, created volatile conditions that were set-off by the assassination of the Austrian archduke in Serbia.

Actually, the responsibility for the war had to be shared by all the major powers of Europe, and Austria was more to blame than Germany. The Germans did not want war and made honest, if belated, efforts to prevent it. The fact was that the relations between almost all of the states of Europe had become as volatile as a "powder keg" with attitudes dominated by vanity and greed. So it was principally a preventable but unforeseen chain of events that was responsible for the conflict more than anything else. To make matters worse, France blindly determined to regain Alsace-Lorraine, promised to support Russia who then intervened in Serbian affairs against Austria, mobilized Russian troops, and unnecessarily ignited the crisis.

Once aroused public attitudes began to change in one of the greatest periods of transition in history and there was little that could be done to avert disaster. The industrial revolution was underway and the inevitable overthrow of the prevailing power systems resulted in the rapid development of human and material resources as struggles soon began to erupt between labor and capital. Obviously, the irresistible oncoming of social and political change contributed much to the widespread unrest and fear which caused increasing aggressiveness by the rulers particularly in Austria, Germany and Russia. Moreover, the war had not been caused by any one state since the major powers traditionally resorted to armed force to settle disputes with their neighbors and to advance what they considered to be important to their national interests and honor.

Reflecting recent industrial developments, as the First World War got underway numerous and increasingly horrific new weapons of mass destruction were introduced into warfare such as aerial bombing, long-range guns, poison gas,

trench warfare, armored tanks, submarine attacks, and the indiscriminate slaughter of civilian populations. Sixty-five million men were mobilized worldwide and the war's total casualties including civilians exceeded thirty million people. Furthermore, vast civilian areas were destroyed and the Allied blockade brought hunger, illness, death and suffering to millions of innocent human beings. Tragically, the conflict not only failed to be "the war to end all wars," its armistice and treaty for the cessation of hostilities was so inexcusably blundered that its consequences were extended and multiplied into the world's greatest disaster.

Finally in 1917, just as the struggle had become an exhausted stalemate, the United States entered the conflict with its vast new resources of men and weapons and it soon became apparent to the Germans that they had no choice but to end the war. Obviously, they believed that an armistice was preferable to a total defeat that would place the German people at the mercy of their enemies. Fortunately, the professorial American President Woodrow Wilson had publicly called for an end to the struggle saying that it had been fought not only to defeat Germany, but to replace alliances for balances-of-power with "justice and self-determination" for all nations everywhere. He idealistically named "fourteen points" for world peace which included open diplomacy, freedom of the seas, removal of trade barriers, reduction of armaments, impartial adjustment of colonial claims, withdrawal and restoration of occupied territories, and an association of nations to guarantee future political independence and territorial integrity. People throughout the world, whose hopes and ideals had been destroyed by the new massive horrors of war, excitedly welcomed Wilson's "blueprint for peace," and the Germans became convinced that Wilson's statements gave them the opportunity to get a fair and impartial settlement of a war they could not win.

By 1918 Germany's great efforts to end the conflict in her favor had exhausted her last reserves. Four years of war had destroyed the most powerful military force in Europe with the loss and injury of millions of her best young men and there was great suffering throughout the Fatherland. Then America entered the war with overwhelming resources so that Germany could no longer hope to successfully resist its enemies. The defense of the Central Powers had weakened, the morale of the troops was low, and the Communists were rioting in Berlin. By September Germany's generals reported they could no longer defend the homeland and advised the government to make peace. Within days Austria-Hungary

asked the American president for peace, Bulgaria surrendered, and the Germans knew the end was near. In an effort to avoid the terrible consequences of an unconditional surrender, the Germans believed Wilson's principles for "peace with justice" would give them their best chance for an armistice in which a mutually acceptable settlement for peace could be negotiated.

Thus in the fall of that year, the Germans informed Wilson that they were agreeable for his proposals to serve as a basis for peace negotiations and requested him to bring both sides together to negotiate an armistice based on his Fourteen Points and subsequent statements. They also informed him that they believed the Allied governments had accepted the President's positions. When it became known that the Germans had asked for peace, much of the Western public was immediately against any deal with the Germans and demanded surrender without conditions. Meanwhile, Wilson realized that unconditional surrender could not be a basis for lasting peace, but he did not know that the British and the French had not taken his declarations seriously believing them to have been only political rhetoric. In fact, the British were traditionally and totally opposed to freedom of the seas and the French would never compromise their right to negotiate secret agreements. However, the idealistic Americans were determined to demand support for Wilson's initiatives and they warned the British, as well as the French, that if they did not agree America might have no choice but to negotiate a separate peace with the Germans. Not wishing to be the cause for the war to continue, Britain and France reluctantly agreed to go along with Wilson. But the British insisted on a reservation on freedom of the seas, and the French demanded the restoration of their invaded areas and compensation for damages to civilian populations.

In an exchange of notes that became known as the Pre-Armistice Agreement, the Germans agreed to withdraw from occupied areas, generally accepted the terms for an armistice, and most Allied and German statesmen considered the pre-armistice agreement to be a binding contract. While the Americans were committed to the armistice, the British had no intention of complying with it, and the French even denied that there had ever been a "pre-armistice agreement." These self-serving disagreements actually doomed the conference before it began. In reality, the possibility of constructive international negotiation and agreement on the basic issues which might establish world peace had been eliminated by

what was described as "the unrealistic idealism of the United States, the imperial reoccupation of the British, and the senseless vengeance of the French." The unilateral terms of the armistice required that the Germans agree to end all hostilities, evacuate invaded areas, and dispose of their armaments.

The Allied occupation of Germany west of the Rhine and the continuation of the Allied blockade had been recognized. However, French Marshal Ferdinand Foch, who was given no instructions regarding the military aspects of the armistice, merely told the Germans what the conditions were, and informed them that the fighting would not stop until they signed the armistice. The representatives of the new democratic German government, which had accepted in good faith Woodrow Wilson's proposals for a fair and impartial negotiation of the end of the war and settlement of the peace terms, were understandably humiliated. They found themselves placed at the mercy of their enemies while millions of their people were starving from the continuing Allied blockade which gave them no choice but to accept the severe conditions that were forced upon them by threats to resume the war. Finally on November 11, 1918, the most horrible war the world had ever known was ended when the Germans lay down their arms and signed, what they considered to be, the "dictated" terms of the armistice.

Mercifully, the terrible conflict had at last stopped, but the horrible apocalypse of death and suffering was not to end. Four years of war had resulted in such destruction of homes, factories, transportation and shipping that the European economy was demolished and the cost of living became ruinous. The total cost of the war is estimated to have exceeded $600 billion which quickly brought on a worldwide depression with inflation that reduced almost everyone, except the very rich, to poverty. And, as if the death and suffering would never end, the conditions of the continued Allied blockade contributed greatly to an epidemic of flu which suddenly raged through Europe and an estimated additional twenty-five million human beings died. Unfortunately for the prospect of future peace, just when mankind's first possibility of establishing international cooperation to maintain world peace began to emerge at Versailles, the Allies were hopelessly divided.

The Americans had announced that while they had no interest in obtaining either territories nor reparations, they would insist on world disarmament and

the arbitration of international disputes to prevent future wars. Believing that a new world order could be based on international justice and self-determination, they were determined that Woodrow Wilson's great idea of a "league of nations" to preserve world peace should become a reality. The British knew that the German economy had to be preserved if the European economy was to regain its vitality. Nonetheless, the British Prime Minister David Lloyd-George decided it was more important to respond to his public's demand to make Germany "pay for the war," and to punish the German Kaiser. Otherwise, Britain appeared to have no specific demands beyond its established interest in freedom of the seas and protection of its Empire. But generally, they also wanted to neutralize the German fleet, to get their share of Germany's colonies and, being almost bankrupt from the war, they wanted monetary reimbursement provided it did not cause economic chaos for the Germans. On a practical basis, they also wanted to make sure that the French did not replace German dominance on the continent. In any case, however, they would use the French against the Americans, and the Americans against the French, to get what they wanted for Britain.

By pre-conference negotiations, the British were committed to support the French demand for security in spite of Wilson's idealistic principles. Lloyd-George felt he had to support claims for reparations against the Germans for starting the war and he knew that Britain could not afford an occupation force in Germany. As for Wilson, he agreed with both France and Britain that since Germany was responsible for the war, it should pay for the suffering and chaos it had caused. However, since he had proposed a league to preserve future peace, the President's vision had passed beyond the horrors of the war, and he was the first world leader to effectively recognize the necessity to utilize international cooperation to establish and enforce international law and order to end wars and to maintain world peace.

After having suffered two vicious invasions by the Germans in one lifetime, the French were obsessed with vengeance and the need for future protection. They demanded the return of Alsace-Lorraine, reparations for war damages, occupation of the Rhineland, a share of German colonies, and new, stronger states in Poland, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia to restrict future German aggression. France also wanted to be the dominant power in Europe and to establish its economic strength over Germany. Long before the armistice their demands had

been developed and discussed with the British. Probably many of the disastrous mistakes at Versailles could have been avoided if the Americans had been given the opportunity to participate in the pre-conference discussions between Britain and France. Still, since both the British and the French had, more or less, said that they would make the "Fourteen Points" the basis for the peace treaty, they realized that they would have to make it appear that they would negotiate within the pre-conference agreements.

At the same time, France was being torn apart by the Socialists on the left and the militarists and industrialists on the right. The militants wanted to make sure that Germany would never invade France again and that Germany would be permanently punished for its brutal and destructive invasions of French territory. The Socialists saw Wilson's idealistic peace as an opportunity to create a better world for the masses and they recognized that peace could not be built on a harsh treatment of Germany. But they were against any opposition to France's right to enact secret agreements, and feeling strongly that France could not rely on others for defense against another German invasion, they believed they had to resort to every possible means to protect the French people against future sacrifices of life and property.

The French also wanted the benefits of the new League while holding on to all the advantages of their old alliances for maximum defense. They considered the peacemaking process to be nothing more than the establishment of national security and believed that the Allies had the responsibility to join with France in insuring that Germany would be kept under "permanent subjugation." But even while French Premier Georges Clemenceau publicly demanded total disarmament and economic stagnation for Germany, the French were secretly seeking opportunities for economic and political cooperation with Germany. With the conference at Paris organized and controlled by the French, and with the delegations being constantly subjected to an atmosphere of hate and vengeance from the French people and the press, it was practically impossible to ignore the past and to look ahead to a future of peace. Unquestionably, it was the unforgiving hatred and the emotional desire for retaliation by the French which principally killed any prospect of future world peace.

Meanwhile, the United States strongly supported the benefits of the new League, but at the same time, the Americans were determined not to become

entangled in post-war European affairs. Generally, the position of the United States was said to be known by almost everyone but was hardly understood by anyone. With most of mankind disgusted with the insanity and brutal excesses of war, Wilson's declarations for peace had aroused worldwide hope and great popular acclaim. His statements were described as "a meeting of necessity between emotional idealism and desperate practicality," which demanded that the Allies respond to the public insistence for an end to a horrible conflict and a future without the scourge of war. It was a noble concept that, while temporarily inspiring millions of people and giving great hope for the future of mankind, would find a difficult chance of success in the "wounded world of 1919." Still, even though excessively impractical, idealism for peace in the future was infinitely preferable to the hopelessness and agony of the past.

The sudden appearance of Woodrow Wilson on the world scene was said to appear to be a timely and almost miraculous intervention of Providence to relieve the suffering masses from the increasing horrors of warfare. The American President was a sincere and convincing advocate of world peace and he was dedicated to his rightful belief that international organization was the only practical way to prevent future wars and to establish and maintain world peace. With great foresight he was convinced that peace could be obtained only by self-governing democratic governments voluntarily acting together in a legal manner to resolve disputes among nations. In that sense, Wilson was far ahead of his time for he succeeded in building a demand for peace among the peoples of the world which continues to build to this day.

Wilson's idealistic vision foresaw the creation of a permanent organization for the peaceful settlement of international disputes, a world body for the adjudication of world issues including modifications and adjustments of the peace treaty and an international forum where the nations of the world would meet and settle arguments rather than resort to armed alliances and wars. It was, in fact, the birth of the "United Nations" concept which was later adapted by Franklin Roosevelt in World War II. Even so, the proposal was not completely original. Wilson had taken ideas from General J.C. Smuts of South Africa and Lord Cecil of Great Britain, among others, but his Presbyterian religious convictions and his academic abilities enabled him to create the most noble and farsighted idea for peace the world has ever known. So much so, in fact, that Clemenceau was heard

to say, "Wilson has Fourteen Points, but God had only Ten." Idealistic and as impractical as it was, had Wilson been more politically astute, more open-minded and outgoing, and had he not attempted to do too much himself, the course of history could have been changed and awesome consequences certainly could have been modified, if not eliminated.

People throughout the world had become so repelled by the horrors and barbarity of a war which seemed to never end that Wilson's high principles gave rise to much worldwide enthusiasm over the hope that a way could be found to prevent another terrible catastrophe from ever happening again. When the President arrived at Paris to attend the Peace Conference he was hailed throughout Europe as a "conquering hero" who had "eased the pain and lifted the hopes" of people everywhere. He had become "their champion, the victor of the war, and the prophet of the peace." Probably for the first time, the Christian belief that man should love his neighbor as himself and the dream of a world at peace for all mankind had become the hope of human beings throughout much of the earth. Many people had begun to believe that, perhaps after all, there was realistic hope for world peace!

Most unfortunately, no one at Versailles knew what Woodrow Wilson wanted, not even his own staff. The politicians and the press at Paris considered his declarations to be impossibly idealistic and impractical. Even though the younger members of the American and British delegations saw the President as truly a champion of world peace, his European colleagues called him "an interfering nuisance who was ignorant of Europe yet presumed to dictate to it." The cynical and self-centered Europeans considered him to be little more than a "Presbyterian professor" completely out of touch with reality. In turn, Wilson thought them to be "out of step with the times" and that they were "grasping and revengeful." Sadly, it was observed that the hopeful idealism of the American President proved to be no match for the cynical realism of his European adversaries.

The first major mistake for the peace conference was its location at Paris. The French capital still suffered from the war's "shell-shock" and British delegate John Maynard Keynes thought it was a "grave initial blunder" to have held the conference at Paris. Others said that "a bellicose temper pervaded the entire community" and Harold Nicholson thought that the "passions of war" should have

subsided before the conference began. Delegates were subjected to vicious press and political attacks against Germany for causing the war and for its savage aggression against the Allies. Nonetheless, the Americans and the British, as well as the Germans, continued to expect the conference to be devoted to the negotiation of terms for the cessation of hostilities and for the restoration of peace, and not for the adoption of conditions of vengeance which would make peace impossible. However, Parisian politics were so emotionally prejudiced that objectivity became impossible. The emotional attitude that the Germans should be convicted and punished became so intense and prevalent that there was little possibility of any positive accomplishment at Versailles.

It was also most unfortunate that the chief delegates to the conference were the ranking politicians who normally were responsible to no one other than themselves, and if to any other, then only to the lowest common denominator of their public's opinion. Since the trade of politicians is expediency which most often gives their policies and actions little lasting effect, when the politician attempts to be a statesman he generally is ineffective because high ideals have little protection against expediency. While Wilson, Lloyd-George and Clemenceau each considered himself to be the best judge of what their people wanted from the conference, no limitations had been imposed upon them by their governments and each of them had only vague ideas as to what their national interests were. And nowhere does the politician's power of vanity, prejudice and ignorance manifest itself so strongly, and most often so disastrously, as when the fate of states and the welfare of millions of human beings is being arbitrarily determined by personalized, unenlightened, often prejudiced and unauthorized representation.

While the Americans were optimistically convinced that the possibility of world peace was within their reach, Woodrow Wilson committed a fatal error when he departed for the conference without having the support of the American people. Almost everyone at Paris, except Wilson, knew that the isolationist American public did not understand nor favor the principles upon which the President insisted the peace must be based. Wilson had been so enthusiastically convinced that his cause was right that he overlooked the political necessity for public support at home, and he had refused to include in his delegation anyone who did not agree with his position on the treaty. Most likely had he worked at building support in the United States, and if he had

included Republicans who might have been favorably influenced at the conference, he would have strengthened his support at home, in the Congress, and at the conference.

The great series of blunders at the 1919 Peace of Paris began with Wilson's personal presence at the conference. He should have stayed at home and used his position and his persuasive powers to build support for his policies while his diplomatic and political representatives at Paris could have done a better job of negotiating his controversial proposals. The Democrats had recently lost control of the Senate and the President was the only leader of a delegation at Paris who did not have the full support of his people behind him, and his adversaries knew it. His presence at every session where an important decision was to be made, his unwillingness to compromise during the early meetings of the conference, and his refusal to consult his own delegation lost him much of the respect and support of his colleagues. Not unexpectedly, the Paris press quickly turned against the Americans and ridiculed Wilson. The major interest of the French, aggressively led by Premier Clemanceau as the dominating chairman of the conference, became quickly apparent. Their primary object was to convince the world that Germany was solely responsible for the war, had to be punished both politically and financially, and that all those who disagreed were pro-Germany.

At Paris Wilson was totally preoccupied with the league and his fourteen points so that he had no plan for the terms of peace nor any instructions for his large staff of experts. He made it clear that his covenant for a league was the foundation for future peace, and although he failed to force Clemenceau and Lloyd-George to honor their promise to support his fourteen points, he succeeded in blunting much of their attacks upon his principles. But it was referred to as a dramatic and historic struggle between "the old world of force and the new diplomacy of democratic idealism." The President also made the mistake of ignoring his large delegation of experts except for his deputy Colonel Edward House. Secretary of State Robert Lansing was rarely consulted by Wilson and Lansing never knew what was being placed in the treaty. Wilson appeared to be interested in little other than his league and his principles. Otherwise, there was no plan of procedure, no discussion of goals, not even a draft treaty. His wary British and French opponents, however, had prepared proposals for both the

treaty and its articles and, from the beginning, they took over the leadership of the conference which was never relinquished.

Mr. Wilson also erred badly by ignoring the reality of the emotional status of the French and British people resulting from the endless slaughter and suffering of the war. With little leadership and statesmanship from their governmental representatives, the French and British people remained determined to get their revenge against the Germans by retaliation. Traditionally, national security in Europe had been acquired by military power and they had known no other means to preserve peace. Consequently, Clemenceau and Lloyd- George had prepared themselves with proposals by which they could best control their own national interests while Wilson was free to do much as he wished about his "League." Still the French argued that the league should have a standing army for military force instead of arbitration which Wilson considered to be in direct opposition to his principles and statements for the League. Thus, from the beginning, it was clear that there would be few, if any, positive accomplishments at Versailles which might realistically advance the cause of a lasting world peace.

It was a poor match between the trusting and idealistic statesmanship of Woodrow Wilson against the "scheming and expedient politics" of Clemenceau and Lloyd-George who considered the American President to be a mere "theological intellect." British delegates Keynes and Nicolson said that Wilson was like "a slow-minded Don Quixote" tilting with the clever and cunning wheeling and dealing of the European politicians. Soon Clemenceau had managed to turn Lloyd-George against Wilson by supporting British Empire interests in exchange for British support of French security concerns against Germany (as Roosevelt would later support Stalin against Churchill to gain Soviet support of his "United Nations Organization"). The Europeans had long been aware of the reality that centuries of warfare and balances-of-power offered much more national security than the dangerous and undependable hope that right, at last, would become might. A future without war was beyond all reality to them and under existing conditions and attitudes, they saw no hope for peace as an adequate guaranty for their national security.

Wilson's principles, however, were included in the British-American draft providing for a league of nations. He believed that having the covenant inserted and approved in the treaty would be the only practical way to obtain approval of the

league both at Paris and at home since the opponents would not dare to reject peace with Germany. And he insisted that the inclusion of the league covenant in the treaty be the first order of business at the conference. The British and French delegations were largely indifferent and, believing there was little likelihood that Wilson's initiatives would become a reality, they readily agreed to his request, knowing it could be used as a trade-off on other more important issues. But although the proposal created no danger to France, the French considered it to be a major threat to their security. Consequently, in order to get his league approved, the President was forced to compromise on such essential principles as self-determination and territorial integrity which caused him to damage his own credibility in the process. From then on, particularly among those who had been the most idealistic and enthusiastic about the hope for world peace, "disillusion and hypocrisy prevailed."

The lack of an agreed upon purpose and agenda for the conference was a mistake of great importance. Both Wilson and Clemenceau had insisted there would be no advance preparation as to what was to be discussed. Not only was there uncertainty among the Allies as to what had been agreed upon in the pre-armistice agreement, there had been no agreement on the preparation of conference proceedings, no restrictions as to what might be considered, and no prior organization of the conference itself. Instead of being a convocation of the world's greatest leaders and statesmen to build a world of law and peace, it became little more than a political wrangle as to who could get most for his country based on the tragic consequences of World War I.

The "conflict between Wilson's new world and Clemenceau's old world" was soon described as a struggle between the "evil and discredited systems of empires and alliances" and the idealistic dream of a world of peace without war. By its nature, disagreement was inevitable and irreconcilable, and it quickly became "a ferment of ignorance, vanity, prejudice, revenge, incompetence, frustration and despair." Under the circumstances, there was little chance that the treaty could bring about anything other than a pause between one war and the beginning of the next one. In reality, however, it became the continuation of a war that never ended!

Actually, the fate of the President's crusade for peace had begun to be decided the day he arrived at Paris and his insistence that the negotiations be held in secret was another major blunder. He wanted the principal issues discussed in

closed sessions to avoid the hassles and alterations of a large assembly of nations which might cripple or mortally wound his covenant for a league. Thus France, Britain, and the United States, as the "Big Three" who carried the major burden of the war, agreed that they should produce the treaty to be presented to the conference for approval. In this Wilson had badly erred for as a result of his compromises of negotiation he no longer "wore the mantle" of being the champion of mankind's best hope for peace. Furthermore, the wily Europeans were given the opportunity to combine their political manipulations against the trusting and unsuspecting Wilson who, in order to save his beloved league, had been forced to sacrifice his principles and, in the process, the prospect of world peace as well. More than likely, even if the other delegations had been given greater opportunity to participate in the proceedings, the result could hardly have been worse, Germany would have been treated more fairly, and many of the terrible consequences of Versailles would not have occurred.

In his private negotiations with two of Europe's most skilled politicians, the President's "principles" were considered to be naive and impractical and his former allies quickly became his adversaries. His proposal for freedom of the seas was thought to be ridiculous. Trade barriers were increased, not banished. Armaments were not reduced, except for the defeated enemy, and the victors divided the possession of Germany's colonies among themselves. Denied conference participation, Soviet Russia was isolated. Secret treaties continued to be made just as in the past and millions of people were involuntarily and arbitrarily moved from one government to another. Tragically, in many areas the all important principles of territorial integrity and self-government were ignored. Incredibly, out of twenty-three stipulated conditions stated by Wilson, and accepted by the Germans as the basis for a peace settlement, only four were approved.

During the "Big Three" discussions Wilson had to make it clear that any workable hope for maintaining peace would require international cooperation and that the "League" had to be an integral part of the treaty. France, preoccupied with security, wanted to substitute a "Grand Alliance" of the victors to enforce the peace and to guarantee future security against aggression. But since Wilson's plan provided for a military alliance within the league for peace, the Americans killed the French initiative with British support. Still lengthy and

strenuous negotiations were necessary to overcome continuing French efforts to change the covenant for the league. Only Woodrow Wilson's determined persistence and desperate compromise enabled him to retain his most important objective for which he was forced to abandon most of his principles—the inclusion of the League of Nations within the Versailles treaty itself. Finally, after weeks of the most difficult struggle, Wilson became so exhausted and ill that he threatened to leave the Conference unless action was taken on his league.

The President firmly believed his organization for peace was the most important issue to come before the conference and he had learned it would be necessary to compromise his points to gain European support. Although the league was not a threat to French security, he had to use his support for the league to force numerous compromises which served French fear and vengeance. Even so, most of the French efforts to amend the covenant were defeated and due to Wilson's persistence, the covenant was eventually unanimously adopted almost without alteration. But the President had been forced to compromise so many of his principles, including the right of self-determination and territorial integrity, that the cost of the compromises would prove to be fatal. Many delegates became disillusioned, the French were angry and resentful, and the British believed they had not received their share of Germany's former colonies. Thus the Treaty was approved, but many delegations continued to consider it to have been too idealistic, believed it would not succeed and, therefore, felt it was not important. As Professor Keynes would point out, from that time forward, particularly among those who had been the most enthusiastic idealists about the opportunities for world peace, hypocrisy became the rule in a "Carthaginian Peace."

Incredibly, the two most important issues facing the conference were not decided until the conference was practically over. Questions concerning whether the treaty would be preliminary or final, negotiated or imposed, were not even discussed when the conference began. The world had, in fact, assumed that there would be a preliminary treaty and a final treaty both to be negotiated with Germany and her allies. But Mr. Wilson, fearing the American Senate might remove his League of Nations from a preliminary treaty, insisted upon a "Final Treaty" to include the League. The French immediately saw his proposal as an opportunity for them to prevent the Germans from taking part in the negotiations that would permit the Allies to dictate the terms of the treaty. Thus the

original concept calling for a preliminary treaty to be followed by a final treaty, as negotiated by both belligerent and neutral countries, was abandoned. Meanwhile, Wilson continued to insist on what he wanted for the "League of Nations" and Clemenceau and Lloyd-George went along with the President, not with approval but to get what they wanted for France and Britain. As a consequence, the Germans felt completely justified in charging that the conference was arbitrarily changed from a negotiated peace conference to the dictated terms of unconditional surrender. And so arose the basic issue that subsequently opened the way for Adolf Hitler to takeover control of the German government.

Nonetheless, amid the tragic failures of Versailles, at least Wilson managed to preserve his beloved League of Nations. Only his vision, dedication and persistence had enabled him to gain the approval of the covenant by the commission in almost its original Anglo-American form in a matter of days. It was a remarkable achievement under the circumstances and it truly became mankind's first movement towards collective international security. A new age for the interdependence of nations had been conceived as a great leap forward for all people everywhere towards the elimination of war and the establishment of world order. But, unhappily, it was obtained at a terrible cost. The French never forgave Wilson for defeating their efforts to make the league an anti-German balance of power, and the British and their dominions were furious because they were denied their share of the spoils of war. So the President won an unanimous approval of his covenant, not because it was generally favored, but largely because the delegates considered it to be a mere idealistic hope that would never become a reality. Actually, they were anxious to get rid of it so they could get down to what they considered to be more serious business. So it was said that in reality Woodrow Wilson had "won the battle but lost the war." Unfortunately, the President had not only exhausted all his influence but he had also sacrificed his health in the process.

While initially there had been broad public support in America for Wilson's league, he had been so convinced of the rightness of his cause that he failed to make the necessary concessions to build a strong commitment. Then as he returned to Washington to get support for the league, he found that it was too late to do so. In fact, a firestorm was raging over a treaty which would involve the isolationist United States in European affairs, and he was distressed to learn that

the covenant would not be accepted without recognition of the "sanctity of the Monroe Doctrine," and other amendments. In fact, the Senate had begun to dismantle the covenant and the press had begun to turn against it. Wilson knew that the demand to include the Monroe Doctrine and other domestic issues would be considered as inappropriate at Versailles, meaning that he would be forced to go back to Paris to reconvene the commission and ask that the amendments be accepted. He was embarrassed to be placed in the hypocritical position of having to demand that special conditions for America had to be included in the treaty in direct opposition to some of the principles he had insisted that others accept. Meanwhile, it was widely believed in Europe that Washington had killed the league and the President's prestige and influence rapidly declined. The fact was that traditional emotionalism, selfish interest, and a world in turmoil had become his overwhelming opposition so that he was left with no choice but to sacrifice his principles in order to save, what he sincerely believed to be, the world's best hope for international peace and security.

By this time American isolationism and French vengeance had become major causes of the change of attitude toward Wilson's principles and declarations at Versailles. In addition, during the President's absence, Colonel House had believed that his support on such issues as the occupation of the Rhineland by Allied forces and French control of the Saar Basin were necessary to get the French to give up their insistence on an independent Rhinish Republic. The French had refused to compromise on the Saar issue claiming it was a minimal security requirement. The fact was, however, that many issues were brought before the assembly that had nothing to do with the war. When Wilson returned from Washington, he was greatly distressed to learn that House had agreed to weaken or neutralize his most important proposals, and the President declared that House had literally given away everything he had won!

But the worst was still to come. Before Wilson left Paris he had obtained Lloyd-George's agreement that only military matters would be considered in his absence. As soon as the President was gone, the French began yet another effort to get a preliminary peace settled based on their insistence on the reduction of German armed forces, the readjustment of German frontiers, and the imposition of reparations. Lloyd-George, pressured to get British soldiers home and for reimbursement of war costs to a bankrupt Britain, moved to get the peace terms

settled as quickly as possible, which was quickly approved. Meanwhile, although Wilson had instructed Colonel House to agree to no changes or new issues without consultation, House believing further delays would favor the Germans, cast the vote of the United States to support a preliminary peace agreement. Then, with Wilson not present to use his league to block consideration of other issues, most delegates acted on what they believed to be more important matters, such as reparations, boundaries and colonies. Thus House allowed himself to be persuaded to agree on important changes knowing that Wilson's principles were being violated. He later contended that it was necessary to make concessions to the French to keep their support for the covenant.

Wilson had been particularly shocked to find that Colonel House had agreed to take up a preliminary treaty relating only to military and security matters without the league covenant. The President quickly recovered, however, and insisted that the covenant be included as the most important part of the peace treaty. But when he proposed adjustments to the covenant to accommodate the American concern for the Monroe Doctrine, the French were quick to commit their support, knowing they would then be able to force the President to compromise on the issues vital to the security of France. Thus what appeared to be the President's willing compromise of his idealistic principles greatly neutralized his political leverage and disillusioned many of his associates.

Then the issue arose which would become the most inexcusable and probably the most damaging blunder of all. Instead of recognizing that a strong German economy was essential for a recovering Europe and that the political and economic isolation of Germany would likely result in poverty, chaos, militarism and war, Britain and France insisted that Germany had to pay compensation for damages. Nor could the Americans be blameless for, although they made no demands for reparations, they believed that France and Britain needed reparations to repay their war loans to the United States. Thus it was quickly decided that demands would be made for reparations and the haggling continued throughout the conference. The only question was who would get how much?

Eventually, the British agreed to make some concessions. While both Lloyd-George and Clemenceau continued to insist on totally unrealistic sums to be paid by the Germans, the British conceded that once an assessment had been agreed upon it was possible that payments might be modified. But Clemenceau

intentionally demanded sums the Germans would be unable to pay so that the French occupation of the Rhineland could be linked with reparations. Specific figures ran as high as fifty billion dollars when the best economic pre-war year in Germany had produced only a three hundred million dollar trade surplus. After long and bitter debate, no agreement could be reached and the treaty referred only to a partial payment of five billion dollars in gold with further assessments to be agreed upon.

Another calamitous consequence occurred when the treaty was being drafted by working parties. Since it had been assumed that the treaty would be a preliminary one, the draft treaty included extreme positions raised during discussions which were expected to be negotiated, traded and modified before being placed into the final treaty. However, when Wilson's unexpected insistence that there should be no preliminary peace document was agreed to, committee recommendations were hurriedly placed in the treaty without further discussion, thereby imposing conditions on Germany which were more harsh than had been intended. Compounding one mistake after another, the treaty was assembled and printed in great haste, not one person read it in its entirety, and the greatest disaster in the history of international relations followed. It was said to be as if an international peace council had been suddenly transformed into an international war council. Clemenceau and Lloyd-George had actually produced, as the Germans would later charge, not peace but the "dictated enslavement" of the strongest and only unified country in Europe. Thus began the darkest period in human history when the demagogue Adolf Hitler was given the means for seizing total power in Germany by claiming that the harsh conditions of the Versailles Treaty had enslaved the German people. Unfortunately for much of mankind, vengeance begat its horrible counter-vengeance.

Without question, the most disastrous blunder of the Versailles treaty involved Articles 231 and 232 which required that Germany and her allies accept the responsibility for the war with the obligation for compensation of damages to civilians and their property. It became the infamous "war guilt clause" which Adolf Hitler successfully exploited to arouse German emotional nationalism. The designated civilian leaders of the new German democracy were branded as the "November criminals" and the incident was scornfully referred to as "the stab in the back." But nothing caused greater anger and resentment than the claim

that Germany had been the cause of the war. Clearly, had that "propaganda bonanza" not been bestowed upon the malcontents and gangsters of post-World War I Germany, there would have been no seizure of power by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party and, most likely, no World War II. Indeed, that was the basic blunder which would lead to the errors, mistakes and blunders that followed in the worst catastrophe in human history. While it was true that German militarism had been a principal cause of World War I, it is also true that the French insistence on vengeance was the principal cause of World War II.

Few major issues in history have been subject to more debate than that of the responsibility for World War I. Indisputably, neither side was innocent of having contributed to the conditions which caused the great conflict. But in war, winners are right and losers are wrong and the victors dictate the peace. One-eighth of Germany's land area was taken away which was populated by six and a half million Germans. She lost all of her overseas colonies, her army was reduced to 100,000 men, crippling reparations were imposed, the Rhineland was militarily occupied, the German navy was reduced, submarines and the air forces were abolished, the General Staff was disbanded, and the Kaiser and German war leaders were to be tried for war crimes (but were never brought to trial). These conditions were arbitrarily forced upon Germany by threats of invasion and a blockade which continued throughout the conference. The fact is that the war guilt clauses not only killed any hope of discussion and negotiation between the Allies and the Germans on the treaty, but it became the "cause celebre" of World War II.

Afterwards, much of the world was astounded by the shocking consequences of the Paris Peace conference. Even on the Allied side, most general observations questioned the terms of the treaty. Harold Nicolson blamed his own British delegation, as much as that of the French, saying that "If I were the Germans I shouldn't sign for a moment," and American Bernard Baruch said the treaty was unworkable because of economic terms. Actually, five of Wilson's aides were critical of the treaty and offered to resign: Adolph Berle felt Wilson's principles had been "abandoned in letter and in spirit;" Joseph Fuller said, "America has bartered her principles in a series of compromises with interests in imperialism and revenge;" Samuel Eliot Morison concluded that both American interests and ideals had been violated; John Storck thought the truth would make Germany

"eager for revenge;" and George B. Noble believed that American ideals had been "sacrificed on the alter of imperialism" and would be "provocative of future wars." Secretary Lansing was also shocked and said that the treaty meant "a new century of war" which the league would be "powerless" to prevent, and that the conditions which produced the war had been "supplanted by other conditions equally productive of hatred, jealousy, and suspicion."

When the German delegation arrived at Paris they were treated like criminals, armed guards were posted outside their hotel and they could only walk in a nearby park surrounded by barbed wire. Their treatment by the French people and by the conference was said to be "disgraceful and humiliating." Finally, after they threatened to go home, they were given a copy of the treaty to see its contents. During almost six months of deliberations they had been provided no opportunity to learn what was taking place regarding the discussions on the armistice or the treaty. They did not know whether it would be a negotiated treaty, as they believed it had been agreed, or an imposed or dictated treaty. Instead, they were suddenly called into the conference and the completed 80,000 word document was handed to them as Clemenceau said, "You have asked for a treaty. We are ready to give you peace. We shall present to you now a book which contains our conditions." Then they were simply told they had fifteen days to present their "observations" in writing. Many Allied delegates, as well as the Germans, were shocked for the treaty revealed that hate and revenge, instead of international cooperation for world peace, had taken over the conference. And sadly, the world's hope that the calamity of war could be banned forever had vanished.

Instead of producing an agreement to end a war and to create the opportunity to build a basis for future world peace, the conference had been turned into a summary court which had convicted and punished the accused without a fair trial. Furthermore, it was done in direct violation of the pre-conference agreement which had been enacted with the understanding that there would be an armistice and a negotiated peace treaty. Obviously, the French had intended it to be a conviction of guilt with penalties and punishments that would make Germany a permanent secondary continental power. The fact was that the French were unwilling to enact conditions upon which peace could be built, had insisted on decisions which were directly opposed to the principles on which the armistice had been based, and on which the conference had been convened.

Instead, arbitrary decisions were made affecting vast areas of the world changing the lives of millions of people without consultation or consent. And although it should have been obvious that peace cannot be established between two parties so long as one party is seized by anger and hate, the French had insisted on conditions of vindictiveness and retaliation. They refused to recognize that it is futile to attempt to restore peace so long as an aggrieved party is consumed by a compulsion to retaliate. Peace requires an attitude, if not of forgiveness, then at least a mutual understanding to "live and let live." Unfortunately, it soon became apparent to some delegates and observers that the Versailles conference was taking place under almost impossible circumstances, that it appeared highly unlikely that peace would be established, and that "the war to save democracy" had been fought in vain.

Once the German delegation could study the treaty they saw that it had gone beyond their worst fears and that it was nothing more than a "Diktat." They unanimously agreed that the terms were insulting and unbearable and that the German government could not sign a treaty which was "both hateful and dishonorable." In Germany the government found the treaty to be completely unacceptable since it was "nothing more than a continuation of the war by other means," and they added that if they had known that was the Allied attitude, they would have fought to the end. The President of the German Assembly said, "It means the annihilation of the German people. It is incomprehensible that a man (Wilson) who had promised the world a peace with justice upon which a society of nations would be founded, has been able to assist in framing this project dictated by hate." Moreover, the Germans believed they had been deceived and forced into the consequences of an "unconditional surrender." Accordingly, they responded by insisting that the Allies live up to a "binding" pre-armistice agreement. After claiming they could demonstrate "point by point" that the treaty was inconsistent and in conflict with Wilson's fourteen points, they asserted that the Allies were obligated to revise the treaty accordingly. Many of the Western delegates and observers agreed with them.

It was a fact that the terms of the treaty had been "skillfully crafted" to appear to include the fourteen points while imposing extreme penalties against Germany that gave the Allies almost every possible benefit. The Germans had believed that by removing the monarchy, and by accepting Wilson's democratic

principles, they would receive a just and fair treaty based on a voluntary armistice. They had recognized they would be expected to withdraw their troops from invaded areas, to expel the Kaiser, reduce arms and be liable for some compensation for damages. But no one in Germany, and many in the West, had any idea that Germany would be treated as a "guilty criminal." German author Joachim Fest contends that it was "the psychological affronts more than the material exactions which traumatized all of Germany," that the "Carthaginian harshness" created the "disgrace of Versailles," and that it was "the pointless vengeful moralism" which created the hate and resentment among the German people. Author Hannah Vogt adds that "the stab-in-the-back legend gave them (the Germans) a rationale for their hatred of democracy, of the Republic and of anything new. Later on, it was the grist for the Nazi mill and thus it turned into one of the most pernicious political myths of the recent past."

The Germans contended that their government had agreed to peace negotiations on the basis that there had been no unconditional surrender, that they had voluntarily asked Wilson for an armistice, and that they had ended the war under a contractual agreement with the Allies. They also claimed they had been assured by Wilson that the Allies had agreed to negotiate the peace based on the President's principles and declarations, which would apply equally to all nations at the conference, with the understanding that the war had been between the Allied countries and the militant Kaiser's government—and not the German people. In addition, they charged that the United States had violated its own principles and beliefs by having yielded to the imperialistic powers who were motivated by emotional revenge.

As to the effect of the treaty upon Germany, they said that it would cause their country to "collapse economically" and that millions of Germans would suffer and die. It was apparent to them that the Allies had intentionally framed the treaty to ruin Germany and they denied the charge of war guilt pointing out that other countries had shared the responsibility for the war. Furthermore, the wartime German government had been replaced and they strongly objected to the imposition of reparations which would deprive the German people "of work and bread," and result in chaotic economic conditions. Citing the agreement of the Allies that the conference would negotiate a peace treaty, they strongly objected to the convictions and penalties exacted against Germany without its participa-

tion. Finally, realizing it was either capitulation or more war, they agreed to pay twenty-five billion dollars in gold and requested immediate membership in the League of Nations. But, except for one concession on Upper Silesia, every request by the Germans was bluntly rejected by the Allies who continued to charge that Germany had brought on the war. And furthermore, that "They cannot pretend, having changed rulers after the war was lost, that it is justice that they should escape the consequences of their deeds."

Prior to the armistice the Germans had believed that if they eliminated the monarchy and accepted Wilson's proclamation of Western democratic principles they would receive a fair hearing in negotiation of a peace treaty to end the war. They had realized they would have to give up their occupied territories, withdraw their troops, reduce their armed forces, and even pay some reasonable compensation for damages, but no one in Germany expected that they would be charged and convicted as "guilty criminals" and severely penalized by a "kangaroo court." Infuriated and humiliated, the Germans both at Versailles and at home, believed their enemies had intentionally resorted to "dictated slavery and economic chaos" in an attempt to prevent Germany from regaining a position of power in Europe.

Shocked by the severity of the so-called treaty, the Germans countered by asking for an independent commission to make a "fair and just" determination as to the responsibility for World War I. They had accepted the necessity for concessions in the treaty negotiations and they were prepared to do so. Nor did they have any strong objection to being disarmed since it was understood there would be a world conference on general disarmament. What they did object to was that millions of Germans were being placed under "foreign" rule; ten percent of Germany's land area was being transferred to other countries; their overseas colonies were being taken from them; parts of their most industrialized area and much of their coal mines would be occupied or dominated by foreign powers; and the payment of reparations would cause economic and political disaster in Germany. Lastly in desperation, they said, "Those who will sign the treaty will sign the death sentence of many millions of Germans."

Arguments still persist as to whether the Germans laid down their arms based on the agreement that the peace terms would conform to Wilson's principles and, if so, whether the Allies fulfilled or violated the agreement? However, it is estab-

lished that nineteen of the twenty-three Wilsonian conditions were flagrantly violated in the final peace agreement. Before Wilson first arrived at Paris, the Germans had requested Colonel House to prepare a commentary on the "Fourteen Points" which could be used to obtain Allied agreement to use Wilson's statements as a basis for the peace terms. Unfortunately, the summary by House became the official interpretation. The Germans thereby took Wilson's principles literally, the French and the British considered them to be only Colonel House's interpretation, and the incident became a tragic influence from which much that followed was multiplied. In truth, there had been no basic understanding and no agreement between the victor and the vanquished. Vast differences had quickly arisen which a critically flawed conference could not possibly have resolved resulting in the general pursuit of largely selfish national issues. It was a tragic betrayal of the sacrifice of millions of lives in the Great War as well as of the world's great hope for an end to the catastrophes of future wars.

Several of the American and British delegates objected to the harshness of the treaty and believed its unnecessary humiliation of the Germans would have disastrous consequences. But instead of compromise or even discussion, an ultimatum was issued for the Germans to sign the treaty as it was written. Denied the opportunity to sign on a conditional basis, and refusing to execute a treaty which branded Germany with war crimes and war guilt, the German government resigned. Then, only three hours before the Allied deadline for a "march across the Rhine," a new government agreed to "sign away the honor of the German people." It was considered to be one of the most disgraceful moments in the history of international relations. While it could be understood that the French and the British people, after many painful years of millions of casualties and overwhelming suffering, were possessed by an emotional compulsion for revenge, at least the brutal slaughter had been brought to an end. And Woodrow Wilson, knowing the worldwide demand for no more war, had brilliantly responded to the wish of the masses. The greatest blunder was that Clemenceau and Lloyd-George failed to acknowledge the popular demand for peace, unlike Wilson, and they continued to insist on the ineffective and outdated concepts of the past to impose conditions of revenge and retaliation against their former enemies, which could only insure the continuation of hate and conflict in the future. The fact was ignored that peace cannot prevail unless conditions of freedom and justice

permit the rule of law to be established and enforced by means of international cooperation as advocated by President Woodrow Wilson.

France and Britain also made the mistake of sending politicians instead of statesmen to Versailles who turned the meeting into a political circus rather than a peace conference. Statesmen or diplomats, instead of Clemenceau and Lloyd-George, would have more likely followed the traditionally established and agreed upon procedures for an armistice and peace treaty. Moreover, such a conference would have more effectively advanced its purpose for building the peace and preventing another war. They also would have known that it is impossible to build peaceful relations based on hate and vengeance. It would have been obvious to them, as it was to the economic experts, that Germany could not exist in a vacuum, and that when people cannot eat they will fight to avoid starvation. That was the real tragedy of Versailles. France and Britain permitted hate and revenge to overwhelm enlightenment and reason and millions of human beings would pay the cost of the stupid blunders of the politicians who were incapable of being statesmen. David Lloyd-George later admitted that when the fourteen points had favored the Allies they had been included in the treaty, but where they favored Germany, then other principles were inserted. Sir Henry Wilson thought the Germans had made a good case, that much of their response helped their case for considerable modification of the treaty, and they had even recognized that France had been given a dominating position on the continent. Finally, Lloyd-George decided to insist that Clemenceau and Wilson revise the terms concerning Germany, the League, reparations and cessions to Poland. But when he did so, Clemenceau "savaged" the Prime Minister, saying that the British had made no concessions, returned none of Germany's ships, refused to give up any of Germany's former colonies, and had failed to propose anything to restore Germany's merchant marine and overseas trade.

Even if Germany had been the sole cause of the war, it was completely unreasonable for anyone to believe that more war could be avoided by humiliating, punishing and restricting Germany to the point where her very survival would be in doubt. Obviously, European prewar interests and alliances were dangerously mixed-up and no nation actually wanted war. The major states had been entirely too proud and overly-sensitive by fearing their status was being threatened, and they had been too quick to defend what they considered to be their national pres-

tige and security. But more than anything, the conflicting alliances, national self-centeredness, macho militarism, and escalating armaments had created so much general tension throughout the continent that the Serbo-Austrian crisis simply ignited a "European tinderbox." Clearly, World War I was caused by the "ruling class" mentality of the major powers of Europe and their traditional belief that might was always right.

During a meeting of the American delegation, Secretary Lansing suggested a memorandum on concessions to the Germans, but President Wilson became immediately alarmed. Afraid criticism on the treaty might endanger his league, he said, "We don't want to soften the terms, but we do want to make them just. Wherever it can be shown that we have departed from our principles we ought to have rectification." Then, as most delegates indicated they wished to make suggestions, Wilson lost his patience, said that the time for such questions had been when the treaty was being written, and abruptly adjourned the meeting.

Considering the nature of the Versailles treaty, the German counterproposal of 65,000 words was surprisingly moderate and conciliating. It proposed that Germany would enter the League at once with equal status, voluntary disarmament would be undertaken since Wilson had proposed a general arms reduction, and that while refusing the cessation of Upper Silesia and the Saar Valley, they would agree to supply France with coal. However, no territory, including Alsace-Lorraine, should be ceded without a plebiscite conducted in accordance with Wilson's principle of self-determination and, they added, that if the Austrians voted for union to Germany, the Allies should not oppose it. They also said they could not agree to cede German areas to Poland but that Danzig, Memel and Konigsberg could be made "free ports" to give Poland access to the sea. Furthermore, Shantung would be released to China and a committee was suggested to handle mandates concerning their former colonies. Lastly, they agreed to pay, with qualifications, twenty-five billion dollars in reparations. The British First Lord of the Admiralty found that the German response would be "the most brilliant treaty that victors had ever imposed upon the conquered."

But the Allied response of 20,000 words contained no compromise. They had already decided that Germany was responsible for the war and that the Kaiser and others would be tried for war crimes. Specifically, Germany was charged with having armed itself for offensive war and that it had provoked Austria to

make war on Serbia. Other accusations included the waging of brutal warfare, the pillage and destruction of civilian properties, and the responsibility for the death, disease and starvation of millions of soldiers and civilians, all of which was so heinous that it could not be excused by a mere change of government. However, membership in the League of Nations would be accepted with the obligation to support international commitments, but there would be no plebiscite in Alsace-Lorraine, and Danzig would not be returned to Germany, nor given to Poland. Finally, no colonies would be returned to Germany.

When it appeared that the Germans might refuse to sign the treaty they were told unofficially that Allied troops were ready to march into Germany. Also, both the French and the British unofficially promised they would be treated more generously after the treaty was signed. Deprived as they were of any compromise, the Germans found themselves at the mercy of their former enemies. They knew that if they did not sign the treaty there would be a continuation of the blockade, an invasion from both East and the West, a plague of famine and pestilence, increasing Communist revolts and, above all else, that the Fatherland would be reduced to a number of insignificant and powerless states. They had no choice but to sign.

By June 1919 the conference finally ended. After more than five long and difficult months of disorder and haggling negotiations, thirty-two nations signed what was supposed to be a peace treaty with Germany. The covenant contained 440 articles, 75,000 words and it was immediately apparent that its consequences would be an awesome disaster. Herbert Hoover was horrified at its harshness. Even Lloyd-George called it a "ridiculous and preposterous document." General Smuts prophetically declared that "instead of making peace, we make war," and that "the situation in Europe will become intolerable and a revolution must come, or again, in due course, an explosion into war." Keynes predicted that "The Allies were sowing hatred for the future; they were piling up agony, not for the Germans, but for themselves," and the American "New Republic" warned that it was a "prelude to quarrels in a deeply divided and hideously embittered Europe."

Even had there been no major blunders committed at Versailles, would it have been realistic to expect the conference to successfully establish a workable basis for world peace under the circumstances and attitudes which then existed? Although the world had yearned for peace to end the brutal struggle and Wilson's

concepts had nobly represented the people's desire for a future without war, the prospect of building a new order when the old had just collapsed was not promising. The Europeans had little experience with democratic principles, the masses had only begun to demand their rights, and the hope nations might abandon their traditional self-interest and prejudice for multi-lateral action remained a distant dream for the future. Many years and much suffering would pass before the ideal of international cooperation would have the possibility of becoming a reality. The mere idea that a country might voluntarily submit some of its rights of nationalism to an assembly of nations for the purpose of world peace was literally unimaginable. The fact was that only an isolated and idealistic country such as the United States, which had been able to remain economically and politically strong after the war, could have advanced such an idea.

Although it was an improbable dream, it was not an impossible one. World peace could have been established and World War II could have been avoided, in spite of the blunders of Versailles, if the United States had not critically wounded the League's great potential. Had America strongly supported the League and its future peacekeeping operations, Adolf Hitler's fanatic and barbaric evil would not have been fostered upon the world. Moreover, with a more peaceful environment the Allies might have combined their efforts successfully to restore Germany to the community of nations both politically and economically. Pathetically instead, the needs and demands of a radically changing world were ignored by the old-world politicians who were unprepared and incapable of recognizing that cooperative action by a coalition of nations to end war and to maintain peace was possible.

In the sense of hope and progress, Wilson's ideals for international cooperation were one of the most brilliant and inspired acts of political leadership of man. It was most unfortunate that his noble ideals could not have occurred at a time of more enlightened leadership and less disastrous circumstances. Nonetheless, it was the desperation of the times and the chaotic post-war conditions of Europe that inspired Woodrow Wilson. He understood the only practical answer to mankind's eternal search for peace and he had seized the moment and successfully enthused world opinion on the necessity and the possibility of world order under the rule of law. He alone articulated the principles and provided the leadership which enabled the Anglo-American covenant to be approved by the Conference without being

changed. It was a formidable achievement under those conditions and it appeared that he had at last attained his noble aim for the international organization—the League of Nations—to bring peace to the world. But the price had been too great. The French never forgave him for defeating their opposition and their amendments. The British and their dominions were angry because they were denied their claims for German colonies. Even the Japanese were upset when their racial equality proposal was not in the treaty. Still, the covenant for the League was approved unanimously by the delegates, not because it was so widely favored, but largely because no one wished to stand openly against its noble goals. While some shared the dream, most of the delegates thought it to be mainly an expression of hopes and ideals which would never come to pass. In fact, their main interest had been to get rid of it and to get on with what they considered to be more important and realistic business.

As soon as the conference ended an exhausted Wilson hurriedly sailed for home. After his success in getting the Senate amendments included in the treaty, the support of the American public and the press increased, and Wilson was confident it would be approved. At that time, only eighteen out of ninety-six senators were unalterably opposed, yet many questions remained to be resolved involving national sovereignty and constitutional rights. Then, after the President decided not to discuss any further compromises, and refused even to respond to information requests fearing more changes would kill the treaty, support began to decrease, and by the time the committee report was sent to the Senate, forty-five amendments and four reservations had been added to the treaty. Wilson's dream was being seriously altered and, concluding that only the American people could help him save the League, he immediately hurried off to campaign across the country. After thirty-seven speeches in twenty-nine cities in twenty-two days, the desperate "evangelist of peace" had so completely exhausted himself that he was suddenly and tragically struck down by a paralyzing stroke.

The cause of world peace had lost it's champion just when he was needed most and the treaty was defeated in the Senate. But after a great outcry by the American people, it was reconsidered. However, the treaty had been so vastly changed by amendments and reservations that Wilson could not bear to see his beloved League of Nations bled to death. Then he took the critically questionable step of asking his supporters not to accept the greatly amended document so that it was defeated by seven votes! The President of the United States was totally

embarrassed and devastated. The United States was the only nation among the thirty-three conference powers to vote against the peace program which had been proposed by its own president. The United States of America, the world's greatest champion of liberty and freedom, had assassinated the best hope for peace mankind had ever known. And according to future American president Warren G. Harding, it was "a colossal blunder of all time".

The world was shocked that the treaty proposed by the President of the United States was rejected by his own country and that the League of Nations had been denied its opportunity for success by the withdrawal of America's essential support. In France the treaty was accepted only technically after being viciously attacked by political parties from the right and the left. And in Britain, only a bare majority was obtained where it eventually became so controversial that the Germans were later encouraged to violate the treaty's restrictions without fear of reprisal. But tragically, the great promise of the League had been so crippled that it would never attain the respect and support needed for it to exert a meaningful influence upon international affairs and the cause of peace. Inexcusably, man's greatest hope for peace had been stupidly bungled and its coup de grace was inflicted by the very country from which it had originated. As was widely reported, "the treaty was despised in Germany, hated in Japan, not signed by the Communists, and was denounced in Austria, Hungary, and Yugoslavia." It did succeed, however, in providing Adolf Hitler and his Nazis with precisely what they needed to ruthlessly seize power by manipulating the emotional hatred and vengeance of the German people against the hated "diktat" of Versailles. So the treaty became the cause and the excuse for German anger and hate against the rest of the world which festered into mankind's most dreadful nightmare.

While the enactment of the treaty generated little enthusiasm anywhere there were a number of positive consequences. It was considered to have been at least a partial response to the demands of a world sick of war which had brought the disastrous struggle to an end. Woodrow Wilson had given the world's ordinary people their first hope for a better life of peace and freedom and, in principle, the promise had begun towards the necessary recognition that some degree of national sovereignty must be voluntarily set aside for an international interdependency in order to preserve world peace. Equally important, a League of

Nations was actually placed into operation at Geneva and, as crippled and imperfect at it was, it maintained the world's hope that international cooperation would eventually make world peace a reality. Furthermore, renowned institutions such as the International Court of Justice and the International Labor Conference were established, a number of multinational problems were resolved, and substantial aid and progress was accomplished through the voluntary activity of the League's member nations. Later, the United Nations would be inspired by and based upon the vision, the principles and the concept advocated by Woodrow Wilson as represented by the League of Nations in the treaty. In spite of the failures of the Versailles Conference, world focus was moved from the horror of military conflict, as well as from the generally miserable status of the masses, to the idealistic hope for the peaceful resolution of disputes between states, and for the amelioration of many of the ills of mankind by the voluntary aid of the more advanced nations of the world.

Regretfully, over the years after the conference, the old historic differences proved to be so deep, the concept of international cooperation so new, the mistakes had been so extensive and the disappointments so widespread, that the League was generally ignored and rapidly became almost totally ineffective. Europe quickly returned to its customary "international anarchy" since the Europeans had largely accepted the League covenant in the belief that the new power and influence of America would provide much of the necessary moral and material support to make it effective. Instead, the United States actually turned its back on the League and much of its world support was lost. Soon it had become so evident that the League was ineffective that the Germans and the Italians knew it was incapable of intervening with their aggressive aims against other states. They often referred to the treaty as the "slave treaty," and as the economic chaos grew, the more determined the Germans were to throw off the "shackles of Versailles." Thus Versailles was made the scape-goat for the "war guilt" as well as for every other problem in Germany. Then the blundering Allies, through fear and stupidity, resorted to appeasement and compromise rather than to resist the aggressions of the Nazi demagogue to the point where another devastating war became inevitable. Winston Churchill thought that the Western Powers could have followed a wiser policy by retaining the German monarchy in the face of Communist and rightist revolts which would have stabilized public

order, rallied popular support for constitutional rule, and provided the strong centralized control which could have prevented the chaos which Hitler exploited to gain power.

Again, probably the most inexcusable blunder occurred at Versailles when no one in attendance appeared to be aware that a realistic prospect of international peace in Europe would depend upon the existence of a stable and orderly government in Germany. In fact, it was the only state which was still unified and capable of exerting some stabilizing influence in Central Europe at the end of World War I. Instead, anger and vengeance were permitted to prevail and the fate of Germany was subjected to economic disaster, unemployed militarists, humiliated diplomats, angry revolutionaries, and political demagogues "all seething with revenge against the hated vindictiveness of Versailles." How could have any positive result been expected?

Still Versailles could have been reasonably successful and the League could have become a positive influence on the relations between states in Europe had some of the blunders been avoided. With the support it deserved, the conference would have been enabled to successfully operate as an international forum for debate and negotiation on European issues and other developments. Then with the application of moral restraint backed up by sanctions, some degree of effective influence would have modified conditions in Germany which likely would have averted Hitler's takeover and the commencement of war. In any event, after the horrors of the Great War, the world was ready for extraordinary steps to make world peace become a reality. A better led and well supported League would have certainly attained some, and possibly many, of its goals if Wilson had been more politically astute. Had he built better political support at home, had Britain been stronger and not so lenient with its support of Germany, if France had not been so overcome with anger and unforgiving vengefulness, had the United States given more support to its own President's vision for peace, and if Britain and America had forced the French to recognize that the absence of war depends on the establishment of peaceful relations between states, many of the terrible consequences of Versailles would have been vastly different. Finally, had the League been supported long enough to have modified its shortcomings, it could have helped the world to avoid the horrors of totalitarianism and the catastrophes that followed its brutal and disastrous influence.

Unquestionably, the conference would have been vastly different had it been held in Switzerland or some other neutral location. The French public and press would not have infected the delegations with such an attitude of hate and revenge, and the French and Clemenceau could not have controlled the proceedings. At another location Wilson would likely have been the chairman and the negotiations would have been more properly based on the pre-armistice agreement. Away from Paris and its emotional atmosphere more practical and peaceful relations would have been re-established between Britain, France and Germany. The conference would have been better organized, fear and vengeance would not have dominated the proceedings, impartial consideration would not have produced such extreme charges and sanctions, and competent experts would have warned that reparations would cause adverse economic conditions in Germany. Moreover, the German delegation would have more fairly participated in the negotiations and the treaty would have been produced in a more lawful and orderly manner. Most importantly, the Germans would not have been branded as criminals, there would have been no "diktat," and there would not have been such questionable and unjustified reprisals against Germany. Surely, a reasonably fair negotiated treaty would have been accepted and Germany would have joined and supported the League of Nations. The Weimar Republic would not have been overthrown and there would have been no Nazi takeover of Germany. Then, undoubtedly, the United States would have given its support and leadership to the League which would have become a more effective organization for international cooperation for peace. Finally, World War II would not have shortly followed the conference, and the horror of Adolf Hitler and the death and suffering of so many millions of human beings would not have occurred.

While there are many theories about the causes for the failure of the League to become effective, it never had much of a chance to overcome the conditions of prejudice, ignorance and lack of leadership which prevailed at Versailles. Woodrow Wilson was not only forced to compromise his principles but he placed his proposal for the League within the peace treaty, believing that was the only way it could be enacted, which unfortunately involved the League concept unnecessarily with the controversial issues of the peace treaty. There was also disappointment among the League's supporters who believed that Wilson's compromises and handling of the proposal contributed much to its

ineffectiveness. But the truth was that only his dedicated persistence prevented the total destruction of his covenant by ridicule, attack and incompetence. Another major difficulty also arose between those who believed international cooperation was necessary to preserve the peace and those who believed that only an armed willingness to go to war could maintain peace. Then, following the American rejection of the treaty and the League, Britain and France failed to strengthen the League's attempt to use arbitration and sanctions to end armed conflicts between Japan and China, and Italy and Ethiopia.

Consequently, when the need for a forceful international intervention against aggression became most critical, the League had become so weak and ineffectual that it was completely ignored by the dictators and another war became assured. British historian A.J.P. Taylor believed that "the Fascist dictators would not have gone to war unless they had seen the chance of winning, and the cause of war was therefore as much the blunders of others as the wickedness of the dictators themselves." In the absence of an organized and determined association of nations willing to make the sacrifices to preserve the peace, the brutal aggressions of Hitler and Mussolini plunged the world into World War II.

Disastrously, the arbitrary settlement of geographical problems and national boundaries at Versailles left Europe more bitterly divided then ever. More than thirty million minority peoples, who would always want to return to their homelands, were placed under alien rule, and the countries from which they came should have been expected to struggle to have their land and people returned. Within a few years after the conference, the redrawn map of Europe was seen to have been little more than "a blueprint for another war."

In 1921 reparations of $132 billions in gold marks were finally imposed on Germany for war debts to be paid over thirty years in addition to twenty-six percent of their exports. The Germans had claimed that it would devastate their country and when their economy totally collapsed, the treaty and its reparations were blamed for it. Then, when they could no longer meet their war debt payments and French and Belgian troops marched in to occupy the center of the Ruhr, the Germans attempted to retaliate by inflating their currency. As a result the mark depreciated so rapidly it required sixty-two billion marks to equal one dollar! Thus their extreme frustration and anger, as well as their highly emotional feeling of hate and desire for revenge, was blamed on the war guilt and reparation

clauses of the Versailles treaty. Although only the sum of thirty-six million marks was ever paid, incredibly, at the same time Germany was able to borrow and never repay some thirty-three billion marks from abroad, mostly from the United States.

Within six years after the treaty, Germany's relations with her former enemies had substantially changed and the conditions imposed at Versailles were being essentially modified. The reparations question was never resolved and had been abandoned. The additional treaties enacted after the war generally ended any prospect that cooperative armed intervention might enforce the Versailles provisions. The French even evacuated the Rhineland five years before it was scheduled and any attempt to effectively control German armaments was abandoned by 1927. Unquestionably Britain, France and the United States grievously erred and clearly shared the responsibility for another war by having defaulted on the enforcement of the terms of the Versailles peace treaty which permitted Adolf Hitler to impose military conscription and to rearm Germany with impunity.

The Versailles critics were right—it was a harsh peace. With the possible exception of the war with Japan in the Second World War, most wars have ended in harsh treaties with severe penalties being imposed upon the vanquished by the victors. But in 1945 Douglas MacArthur, in spite of Japan's savage violation of the established standards of warfare, brilliantly adopted policies of reason and moderation which generally eliminated the hate and resentments from which future wars most often arise. It can be said, however, that the Treaty of Versailles did succeed in ending a brutal conflict and brought peace for awhile to a ravaged Europe. Some of the national boundary adjustments were consistent with Wilson's principle of self-determination and, at least, several of the agreements regarding the rights of minorities attempted to enlarge freedom and democracy for people who were oppressed. The war guilt clause, even if improperly levied against the Germans, did establish the principle of war criminality which was later applied at the Nuremberg trials at the end of World War II. Most importantly, Versailles represented a landmark advance for all of mankind when it recognized and approved the League as the necessary first steps toward international cooperation for world peace under the Rule of Law. Lastly, it was also true that many of the agreements at Versailles were made on a provisional basis with the

understanding that they would be adjusted and strengthened with time to become more just and effective.

But sadly, there would be no peace and reconciliation for a world repulsed by war and no one was satisfied with the results of the conference at Versailles. The Germans were furious and determined to get retaliation. The French believed that the Americans and the British had kept them from being compensated for their sacrifices and suffering and had interfered with their efforts for security against future aggression by Germany. The Italians felt they had not been treated fairly. The Japanese were still angry that the conference had refused to consider racial inequality. The Russians had no voice and evidenced little interest in the proceedings. And the United States, after opposing their own President's venerated proposal for world peace, withdrew into its traditional isolation.

Having seen that their former enemies practiced little restraint in the pursuit of their own national interests, the Germans blamed their new democratic government for their difficulties and they accused the Allied powers with treachery and betrayal. And by enthusiastically embracing the "jobs and food" provided by Adolf Hitler's aggressive rearmament, the German economy was soon revived and the people hysterically supported the Nazi declaration of vengeance against the contrived enemies of the Fatherland.

Unquestionably, Britain, France and the United States grievously erred and clearly shared the responsibility for another world war by having defaulted on the enforcement of the terms of the Versailles peace treaty which permitted Adolf Hitler to blatantly reinstate military conscription and to rearm Germany with impunity. Thus most tragically, "the truce that began with the armistice" did not bring peace but led to twenty years of increasing crisis, rearmament and antagonism between Germany and her European neighbors. Although Adolf Hitler and the German people became "the willing human agents of mankind's darkest descent into bestiality and genocide," the blundering fiasco at Versailles was the fundamental cause that brought about the greatest catastrophe in the history of the human race.

Chapter 2

The Appeasement of Germany

The appeasement of German aggression by Britain and France prior to World War II was the most direct cause of the war. The terrible conflict probably would not have occurred at all, and certainly it would have had a vastly different outcome, had Britain and France displayed a stronger degree of moral courage and a greater maturity of political leadership, both in their relations with Germany and by their actions following the illegal and brutal aggressions of Adolf Hitler's Nazi government. It is understandable that so soon after the horror and sacrifice of World War I any actions which might risk involvement in another war were practically unthinkable by the British and French people. Nonetheless, it is inexcusable that Western leaders, and particularly British leaders, lacked the enlightenment and the fortitude to face reality and to make the hard choices necessary to prevent Germany's violation of her neighbors independence, let alone recognize the danger to their own security. By fear and weakness, by compromise and collaboration and, in most cases, by their refusal to accept reality, Britain and France must share much of the responsibility for the world's most horrible political and military catastrophe. It was clearly within their power to have averted it. Nothing less than political cowardice and lack of moral character permitted the British and the French to refuse to effectively oppose Hitler's aggressions when it was apparent that appeasement could only postpone, but not avoid, an inevitable armed struggle to defend their own freedom. If Britain had been as determined as even divided France was to forcefully oppose Nazi expansion while the West held a superiority of arms, Hitler's early aggressions would not have occurred, the Nazi seizure of power in Germany would have been overthrown, and the world would have been saved from its most horrific Armageddon.

Actually, the appeasement of Germany had begun just as soon as the Versailles Peace Treaty was signed in 1919 and the argument over whether the Allied Powers were too soft or too hard on Germany after the war has never been resolved. The French could not forgive nor forget a historical enemy who had invaded their country five times in the previous century, and at Versailles they had forced Germany to be branded with the sole guilt for World War I. Both Britain and America believed that French demands for security were an emotional and unjustified desire for vengeance and, convinced that revenge was no basis for peace, sought to preserve and restore the important economic strength and culture of Germany to the stability of the democratic community of Europe. But the French stubbornly had refused to give in and insisted on disarmament, heavy reparations, and the demilitarization of the German Rhineland. For the Germans, the treaty had become the hated "diktat by the victors to the vanquished."

Afterwards, Woodrow Wilson and David Lloyd-George were criticized for having attempted to oppose French restrictions at Versailles. It was claimed that the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Soviet takeover in Russia had left Germany "unified, uninvaded, and intact" which would enable it again to become a strong economic and military threat on the continent. In fact, the French argued they would be unable to resist future German aggression unless they permanently held the Rhineland and insisted that the German western border be moved back to the Rhine River. Only after the American President and the British Prime Minister agreed to guarantee the future security of France against another German invasion, the demand was withdrawn. But, when Britain and America failed to fulfill their commitment, Adolf Hitler was encouraged to make Germany again the "armed bully" of Europe. Surely, he would not have succeeded had he believed that Britain and America would intervene. Furthermore, when France's need for reinforcement was greatest, and Hitler's aggressions were clearly moving towards another war, there was no effective support from her former allies. It was the lack of courageous leadership and the absence of concerted action by the democratic powers, as well as the refusal to face up to the hard sacrifices necessary for the preservation of freedom, that left only the tragic continuation of armed conflict between the former adversaries of World War I.

As could be expected, German monetary payments to France and the limited occupation of the Saar and the Ruhr by French troops, increased the emotional enmity of the Germans resulting in sympathetic compromises by the British and Americans towards Germany. Later the Germans would claim that the chaotic inflation which destroyed their economy had been intentionally caused by the Allies. Hannah Vogt writes, "we must ask ourselves whether the truly extraordinary financial and moral burdens which the Versailles Treaty imposed upon Germany really left the nation no choice but headlong flight into Hitler's dictatorship?" It clearly provided Adolf Hitler with the conditions and the issues which he needed to gain political control even when the publication of his *Mein Kampf* in 1924 fully revealed his aggressive and brutal intentions to the German people .

Britain and France also had suffered a "mortal blow" when the United States rebuffed its President and refused to accept the treaty and the League of Nations. They felt they had been deserted by an ally who had insisted that they accept unreasonable ideals and principles, then left them to face the consequences. Furthermore, the Germans had been led to believe that the British people wanted improved relations with Germany and that there would be little that France could do without Britain's support. By 1934 the British Labor Party, supported by the Liberal Party, according to Dudley Saward, were "hell-bent on pacifism and leading the way to world disarmament in the face of a resurgent Germany which was openly arming itself to the teeth." While some four billion dollars in assets had been taken from Germany mostly by France, at the same time, some six billions in loans for reconstruction of the German economy were offered, mostly from the United States, and soon the Germans were borrowing from every possible source. The tragedy was that had the Versailles Treaty been enforced up to 1934, the peace and security of Europe could have been maintained and the League of Nations might have become, after modifications of time, an effective international organization for world peace.

British reaction against the Versailles Treaty had begun with the criticism of economist John Maynard Keynes who claimed that it would destroy the German economy and obstruct her development as a peaceful state. Soon widespread opposition to the treaty began to develop as many Britishers were ashamed of what they had done to Germany, and they blamed the French for revengeful harshness even though Britain had generally supported French demands against

Germany at Versailles. They believed the treaty had been unjust and could only be set right by helping Germany regain her place as one of the world's great powers. So the early appeasers began to make every effort to restore good relations with their former enemy, but it was said that the more they offered, the more the Germans pleaded their innocence, and the more guilty the appeasers became. They believed that hate would only generate more hate, that economic chaos often generated violent change, and that forgiveness would be a necessary requisite for the establishment of peaceful relations. But they failed to realize that forgiveness should follow genuine repentance and that it is foolish, to say the least, to remain trustfully defenseless when an armed aggressor threatens harm.

Generally, the French greatly resented the consequences of Versailles. They believed the treaty had denied them their security and the reparations they were due, so they sent military forces into the Rhineland and the Ruhr. And at home they were faced with overwhelming costs to restore their devastated country as they struggled to avoid national bankruptcy. Meanwhile, governmental control swung back and forth between the Left and the Right as political divisions increased between the workers and the upper classes. Support had increased for Communism on one hand and for dictatorial order on the other, while the lack of effective political leadership deeply weakened the national character. Most importantly, French military strength, so dominant in World War I, had been mortally weakened by obsolete equipment and outdated concepts. Soon there were riots in the streets and the nation stood on the edge of anarchy. All the while, the conduct of foreign affairs was being based on their ever-present fear of another German aggression against France. Yet, in spite of Adolf Hitler's criminal rise to power and Germany's aggressive rearmament, the French military remained "mired and transfixed in their glories of the past," and were totally unprepared to meet the reality of a new and present danger.

Meanwhile, in Britain it became fashionable in intellectual liberal circles to support pro-Germanism as being both morally and politically appropriate for peaceful relations for the economic benefit of the two countries. In fact, appeasement mainly grew out of sympathy for Germany as well as from fear of another war. At the time British leaders believed Communism to be a greater evil than Nazism and many opposed French efforts to ally France with Russia to block German economic growth and military power. They admired German

characteristics of strength and order while French weakness and political chaos were ridiculed. They liked Germany's anti-Communism and feared that a British alliance with France might be undermined by the strong French Communist party. Hitler's excesses were excused as having been justified by the Allies injurious treatment of Germany, by historical, political, and cultural differences, as well as by the historic competition for continental power and security which had long made popular a general British dislike for the French. In Germany, Adolf Hitler's use of Nazi terrorism threatened the survival of its new democratic government. Millions of Germans became convinced by the Nazis that the German Army had never lost the war but was "stabbed in the back" by the detested politicians of the Weimar Republic, that the admission of guilt for the war had been forced upon Germany at Versailles, that the Allies had intentionally created economic chaos for Germany, and that French troops on German soil were an insult to every German. As the leader who would restore the pride and strength of the Fatherland and build a new and stronger Reich, Hitler was welcomed with frenzied enthusiasm throughout Germany. Furthermore, many people in France, Britain and the United States believed that Hitler would be good for Germany and they wanted a strong Germany to again occupy her historical position in Central Europe as a buffer against the spread of the Soviet Bolsheviks.

Still in the last free German election, and in spite of the threatening strength of the Communist party in Germany, most Germans refused to be intimidated by Nazi violence and Hitler failed to obtain a majority in the Reichstag. But he proceeded to seize control "legally" by utilizing the faked fire in the Reichstag building under the threat of national "tyranny" to convince the aged Chancellor Paul von Hindenburg to authorize the arrest of opposition Deputies in the Reichstag. That enabled the former rabble-rouser to appear that he had gained political control of Germany in a legal manner. So the most fatal blunder of the German people, which brought upon themselves the responsibility for the destruction of their homeland and the horrors of World War II, was their acceptance of the illegal and brutal seizure of power by Adolf Hitler, their refusal to believe that his armed aggressions would involve Germany in another war, and the failure of the majority of Germans who opposed him to unify their political strength against him. In spite of his published warnings regarding exactly what

he planned to do, the German people wanted to believe in him and were generally ecstatic over his plans to strengthen the Third Reich by aggressions.

The first requisite for a successful dictator is to seize complete political and police control of the nation. With Hitler's opponents in the Reichstag forcibly removed, it was a simple matter to approve "The Enabling Act" giving the Fuehrer total control of the state. Germany, in effect, willingly chose its fate when the stacked Reichstag turned its constitutional powers over to the Nazi Chancellor. The brutal Nazis had destroyed all opposition, and as Oswald Spengler observed, "It is no victory, for the enemies were lacking." Hitler's goals for Germany had been, first, to overthrow the government of the Weimar Republic; to destroy the Versailles Treaty; to rule by the "Fuehrerprinzip" using only "the strongest and the fittest;" to "embrace" all Germans and to make Germans the "master race;" to gain "lebenstraum" for a united Germany; and hatred for the Jews. Within one year after becoming Chancellor, Hitler had destroyed the Weimar Republic, completely relieved the states and the central government of their power, assumed absolute dictatorial control of Germany, abolished all political parties except the Nazis, eliminated all democratic institutions and associations, abolished freedom of the press and speech, took over control and manipulation of every aspect of public life by the Nazi Party, and had begun "the virulent Nazi persecution of the Jews." Then, while casting aside the Versailles restrictions without incurring sanctions by the League or other nations, he talked peace to gain time to rearm Germany for the power to gain his political aims without a war before he could build the strength to win it. Britain, France, the United States and the League of Nations had not only failed to oppose German rearmament, but also committed the first major appeasements of Adolf Hitler which enabled him to gain conquest after conquest until the only alternative left was to become involved in another world war—a possibility which was too horrible to even be considered.

Britain's diplomats in Germany were the first to see the Nazis for what they were and challenged the views of the appeasers at home. As soon as Hitler assumed power, Ambassador Horace Rumbold informed his government about the Nazi coercion of the German people and issued dire warnings about the future. He cited Hitler's anti-Semitism and reported the opening of concentration camps for his political opponents. It was also revealed that many Germans

were leaving the country, others were being eliminated by brutal violence, and that Jews, political opponents, Communists, and those who refused to cooperate with the Nazis, were being denied their jobs and freedom. Rumbold believed that Hitler would be as ruthless abroad as at home and called for vigilance while expressing the opinion that the Fuehrer was an extremist who would viciously attack his neighbors. A.C. Temperley also tried to alert his government on what was going on and asked that the Germans be told to stop their rearmament or Britain would use force if they failed to do so. He advised that the Germans would be "powerless" against the French Army and the British Navy and warned that unless a strong stand was taken against Hitler's rearmament, as soon as he was ready, he would launch armed aggression against Germany's neighbors! A friend of Winston Churchill's, Undersecretary of State Robert Vansittart, attempted to get both the British and French governments to do something about the violations of the Versailles Treaty before the situation became even more threatening to peace. But Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, Lord Londonderry and other government leaders considered such views to be based on prejudice against the Germans.

The strength of the appeasers continued to grow. They argued that criticism and antagonism would only drive the Germans into more aggressive hostility and the sympathizers actively defended Adolf Hitler since many Britons, as well as Germans, believed that once his control was established it would be modified by his responsibilities. They did not believe that he wanted war and said that his major goal was to make Germany strong and respectable again. In fact, the view of the pacifiers became so popular that those who opposed it were accused of being narrow-minded conservatives who would block opportunities for a better and peaceful world. Many of the appeasers also felt that Hitler was preferable to other alternatives such as the monarchy, militarism and Communism. They even advanced the ridiculous argument that Germany should rearm so that it could disarm in "parity" with Britain and France. Not to be outdone, Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald proposed a special plan for "detente" with the Nazi dictator. Even Cordell Hull, Franklin Roosevelt's Secretary of State, expressed the belief that "intelligent and thinking" American people looked upon developments in Germany as a "temporary abnormality."

When the Geneva Disarmament Conference occurred in 1933, Germany walked out of the meeting claiming she had been denied her "equality rights." Many Britishers agreed saying she could not be expected to disarm since, as a result of the Versailles Treaty, she had no arms and they insisted that Germany should have the same rights as other countries. Others in Britain, however, held that it was not realistic to expect Germany's neighbors to disarm when Germany was rearming. One English delegate at the conference called for a joint League of Nations action to stop German rearmament in accordance with the Versailles Treaty, and if she refused to do so, force should be used against her. The non-appeasers, or anti-Germans as they were called, such as Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, Undersecretary Robert Vansittart and First Lord of the Admiralty Duff Cooper, believed that unless Germany was stopped, she would become increasingly aggressive and would start another war. But the compromisers would not be deterred and Hitler was besieged with important visitors from Britain who were assured that he desired the friendship of their country.

By then, it was reported that the furnaces of the "Merchants of Death" were going full blast in the Ruhr and the rearmament of Germany had become so massive it could no longer be hidden. The Western Powers had known about it all along and in early 1935 proposed an equality of arms under a general disarmament agreement. Hitler stalled and, since France had just extended the military service of her troops, the Fuehrer used it as an excuse to defy the Versailles limitation of 100,000 troops for Germany by announcing that universal military service would triple the size of the German Wehrmacht. At the same time, the Luftwaffe was being trained in Russia, submarines were under construction in Finland, Holland and Spain, and two battle cruisers were being built in Germany. Six months later Hitler publicly and defiantly denounced the Versailles Treaty and decreed a general mobilization. As the Fuehrer expected, Britain and France took no action except to protest.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Rumbold, observing that thousands of Germans had been placed in concentration camps, predicted that "the pathological" madness of Hitler, Goering and Goebbels would resort to "deliberate ruthlessness and brutality" in utilizing violence to maintain their control in Germany and to threaten future world peace. Diplomat Duncan Sandys tried to alert his government that Germany would attempt to remilitarize the Rhineland, that Britain

and France should prepare to counteract Hitler's aggression making it clearly understood what their actions would be and stressed that only a strong and determined position would likely stop Hitler's aggression. Vansittart knew what the Nazis were up to and he strongly opposed the British tendency to give Adolf Hitler's apparent intentions the benefit of the doubt. Soon Winston Churchill began his criticisms of the apologists and sympathizers for the threatening conduct of the Germans. He was firmly convinced there was only one thing to do about the "German problem" and that was to treat it like "a mad dog" and "shoot him down before he can bite." It was easier, of course, to engage in tough talk than it was to risk taking steps which might lead to war, but at least, opposition to the appeasers had belatedly begun. At that time, the greatest error was that little effort was made to effectively utilize the substantial leverage of the dominant military power possessed by the Western Allies, and they also failed to make a realistic arrangement regarding the potentially persuasive influence of a coalition of nations against German aggression.

From 1933 to 1934 the majority opinion about Germany in Britain began to change over the extent to which the government should compromise in its efforts to establish good relations with Hitler. More realistic Britons had become convinced that Britain and France had to make more difficult choices if the peace and security of Europe was to continue. Complicating the choice, however, was the fear that Communism was an even greater threat for Britain as well as for France. Unfortunately, France had been greatly weakened and divided by political struggles between Leftist, Rightist, and Communist parties. And in Britain, as authors Martin Gilbert and Richard Gott report, "anti-Communism, like anti-Semitism, and like francophobia, was never far below the surface of appeasement." Adolf Hitler knew that national separatism is the opportunity for the demagogue and he knew how to make the most of such attitudes knowing that idealists are often unrealistic and are inclined to follow the most peaceful way out as well as to view the world not as it is but as they think it should be. So the idealistic but impractical appeasers grievously erred by continuing to ignore reports of Nazi criminality and by deluding themselves in the totally unrealistic expectation that Hitler's Nazi regime would become capable of civilized conduct.

Numerous German emissaries attempted to disarm Britain and France by seeking their cooperation in the "common struggle" against the dangers of

international Communism. They knew the British were repulsed by the thought of another war and talked about better relations since "everybody was for the quiet life." The belief was promoted that "hatred was evil and that love would conquer all," and that world peace could only become a reality by working out a compromise agreement with one's enemy. In fact, most people were convinced that the only alternative to appeasement would be war, and most Britons like most Germans, admired the new law and order of the Third Reich. Lord Lothian, as suggested by Hitler's emissaries, called for a strong British-German alliance to off-set the potential French-Russian domination of Europe.

One English publication suggested that part of East Europe should be taken over by Germany while others thought that if France and Germany wished to destroy each other, why should Britain get involved? Incredibly, it was even said that many Britishers favored more German expansion than did most Germans. Former Prime Minister David Lloyd-George, perhaps feeling guilty for siding with the French at Versailles, called Adolf Hitler "the greatest living German." Britain's diplomats, however, were not deceived. Vansittart observed that those who saw Hitler asking to be deceived would not be disappointed, and Britain's Berlin Ambassador Eric Phipps saw Hitler as the fanatic he was who sought to dominate Europe and accurately predicted that Hitler would make war but not before 1938. The appeasers, however, soon began to by-pass Phipps to get to the Nazi dictator and to mettle in British foreign policy. Lord Lothian even told Hitler Britain had no interest in East Europe.

Once he had defiantly violated the Versailles Treaty with impunity and begun the rearmament of Germany, Hitler believed he could also move against his neighbors without any effective interference. In a May 1935 meeting with French Ambassador Andre Francois-Poncet, the Nazi Fuehrer violently charged that France's new mutual assistance pact with Russia had created "legal insecurity" for Germany. Francois-Poncet advised his government he was convinced that Hitler would use the pact to justify the re-occupation of the demilitarized Rhineland even though he did not know that Germany had been preparing to do so for weeks. Hitler was waiting for the right moment for his first aggressive move of force. Now France was severely divided by political turmoil and Britain was under the influence of the appeasers. Furthermore, the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini had launched an invasion of Abyssinia which caused France

and Britain to be preoccupied with the League of Nation's attempts to impose sanctions against Italy, which Adolf Hitler knew had completely failed.

Then suddenly on March 2, 1936, Hitler marched his troops into the Rhineland. Unknown to the French, the German generals had opposed the move believing that France's powerful armed forces would easily defeat their token troops. In fact, the German commander had been ordered to quickly retreat back across the Rhine if there was any French resistance. In that single critical moment the world's greatest man-made calamity could have been either avoided or radically changed. If only the French could have had the courage or had possessed the enlightened self-interest to have resisted the German invasion. Moreover, Adolf Hitler's first aggressive initiative would have surely been prevented had the United States and Great Britain fulfilled their Versailles pledge to guarantee the borders of France against any further aggression by Germany. The Fuehrer's political reputation would have been fatally damaged in Germany, the German opposition to Hitler would not have been tragically undermined, and likely the upstart former Corporal and his Nazi regime would have been overthrown. Tragically for the world, British appeasement, American indifference and French separatism and defeatism, had destroyed the courage and the will of France and there was no resistance. It was one of the most inexcusable and far-reaching blunders of all time.

Actually, the French government had been prepared to act against the first German aggression in the Rhineland, but Great Britain refused to support them. Then, without the aid of the British, the French military refused to attack the German troops without a general mobilization. They were afraid to mobilize for fear it would cause the Germans to mobilize and there would be another war. Although the Germans feared that France's superior forces might have "blown us to pieces," the French did nothing except reinforce their Maginot Line and Adolf Hitler's all-important first aggression was unopposed. The most decisive moment for the destruction of the Nazi phenomena had been critically blundered while the French fought among themselves in political suicide, and British "political dilletantism" refused to recognize the reality of the German threat to their national security. Clearly the majority of Britons had either refused to face up to reality or failed to at least temporarily give up their personal principles of idealism in the best interest of the nation's future freedom. It was said the greatest

tragedy was that anti-war emotionalism had been permitted to dominate the necessity for public sacrifice for national security. Under the conditions that prevailed in Britain, as well as in France, the French found little encouragement to risk war with Germany in the absence of British support.

Moreover, the French had gone to London to beg the British to join in countermeasures against Germany. In the opinion of author William L. Shirer, "Britain would not risk war even though Allied superiority over the Germans was overwhelming." Even Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden appeased Hitler by saying, "We have no reason to suppose that Germany's present action threatens hostilities." Still, if France had only retained a part of that elan and courage which had won the admiration of the world in the Great War, backed up by her one hundred divisions, she could have easily opposed aggression by merely three German battalions. They not only blundered the opportunity to have avoided World War II, but it convinced Adolf Hitler that Britain and France would do anything to avoid another war and encouraged him to commit the acts that brought on another war. Furthermore, having so clearly revealed their cowardice before Germany's aggression, they lost the respect and support of other European countries who might have joined them in an effective coalition to stop Hitler's march to war.

Deliberately deceitful after the Rhineland reoccupation, Hitler offered to discuss a proposal for twenty-five years of peace in Europe. The appeasers in Britain were so delighted they quickly overlooked the Rhineland invasion saying that Versailles was dead and finished. The smart "Cliveden set" claimed that the move was "a demonstration of recovered status of equality and not an act of aggression." Eden went to Paris expecting the French would also be conciliatory, but they would have nothing to do with any further appeasement of Adolf Hitler. Soon Eden became convinced that any further appeasement of the Nazis was dangerous and that a strong determination to resort to "collective security" could block Hitler's aggressive ambitions. But Neville Chamberlain opposed Eden's demand for greater firmness with Germany and when Hitler began his steps to takeover Austria, Chamberlain and the appeasers were determined not to permit the issue to separate Germany and Britain.

By 1935, with liberals and conservatives opposing each other, the British government called for increased and broad disarmament and, as a result of appeaser

complaints, reassigned its diplomats who had warned about German rearmament. By this time appeasement had grown to the point where it was described as being like a "hidden obsession." Most Britons had been convinced that compromise and moderation would avoid another devastating war and they strongly favored keeping peace with Germany. Then as Chamberlain became Prime Minister in 1937, unfortunately, he decided to serve as his own Foreign Secretary for which he had no experience. While his predecessor Stanley Baldwin had merely gone along with appeasement, Chamberlain made it a major policy. He saw Soviet Russia as a great threat to Europe, he was determined to build a friendly relationship with Germany, and he excluded those who opposed appeasement so that there was no influential opposition to the policy within his government. Soon the new Prime Minister and his colleagues became so distressed over the political disagreements with France that Chamberlain proceeded to conduct his own foreign policy while ignoring the Foreign Office. He sought little advice from anyone and his emissaries were chosen from those who supported his appeasement views.

Another unfortunate blunder for the West was Prime Minister Baldwin's earlier appointment of Neville Henderson as Ambassador to Berlin. According to Leonard Moseley, Henderson was "an admirer of the Nazis" and objected when Hitler's opponents visited London fearing they would interfere with Britain's efforts for better relations with Germany. Henderson actually played a key role in the development of the British appeasement policy which greatly helped the Nazis to seize power and encouraged Hitler to pursue his war of aggression. The ambassador disliked France and sincerely believed that he could successfully bring about peaceful relations between Germany and Great Britain. In fact, Henderson actually advised the Germans that England would not oppose Hitler's seizure of Austria and Czechoslovakia. So while Chamberlain, Henderson and the appeasers, like most Britons, were shocked at the Nazi violence and, particularly, the persecution of Christian churches, they refused to face up to what was really going on in Germany and to understand the real nature and objectives of Nazism. When German-British relations seemed not to improve, the soft-liners tended to blame it on Germany's support of Franco in the Spanish War which had embarrassed the appeasers.

Oddly enough, in spite of the fact that they knew what was going on in Germany, including propaganda, discrimination, brutalities and concentration camps, the British Press favored stronger Anglo-German relations. Even the editor of the conservative *Times* earnestly believed that world peace depended upon the establishment of peaceful relations with Germany. Soon, as the appeasers forced out their opponents, the attitude of the Foreign Office began to change. Vansittart, a staunch supporter of cooperation with the French and who was known as the compromisers worst enemy, was ousted and succeeded by Alexander Cadogan, who was expected to follow Chamberlain's views. It was not long, however, before Eden began to strongly differ with Chamberlain. Henderson and others in the government who continued to believe that Hitler was a man of reason. The appeasers also presumed that good relations with Britain were important to Hitler, that his strong attitudes could be softened, and that a better world could be built by peaceful cooperation. But they made the fateful mistake of completely avoiding reality which imperiled their own future security. Obviously, Hitler was fanatically motivated by completely self-serving principles and goals to serve Germany's aggressive expansionism and it was ridiculous for anyone to believe otherwise. Then disagreements began to arise within the British cabinet. Eden began to press for the enactment of new collective security agreements to provide more leverage for the League and the non-appeasers asked for a four-power agreement with Germany instead of a bi-lateral agreement as proposed by Chamberlain. By the end of 1937, due to his opposition to appeasement, Eden resigned from the cabinet with a strong attack on the government. Then, once the League's defenders had been forced aside, Chamberlain's supporters began to attack the League even though they had gained power by claiming to support the League and its opposition to aggression.

After Lord Halifax succeeded Eden as Foreign Secretary, the Chamberlain government was determined to gain German cooperation by offering Germany her former colonies, economic agreements, and to help Hitler negotiate the return of the Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia. By that time, the appeasement attitude in Britain had grown to such an extent that there was little opposition to Chamberlain, and his influence dominated British politics. It was to be the most fateful and disastrous period in English history and would lead directly to the fall of the British Empire. Only former Chancellor of the Exchequer

Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden, Robert Vansittart, First Lord of the Admiralty Alfred Duff-Cooper, Secretary for War Leslie Hore-Belisha, President of the Board of Trade Oliver Standley, and a few other far-sighted and courageous statesmen, saw the dire danger that lay ahead for the Empire with the likelihood of another devastating war.

As early as 1933 Hitler had begun to demand the return of Germany's "lost" colonies which had been "stolen" from her by the Versailles Treaty. It was not long before Nazi sympathizers began agitation in those colonies where the British were exercising the mandate of the League of Nations. While Berlin preferred that the agitators not offend British officials at that time, the British press immediately suggested that the mandates should be returned to Germany, and the British government called for the question to receive "a fair hearing." With the support of the compromising leaders, the issue was debated in Parliament and even former Prime Minister Lloyd-George said that the German position was reasonable. However, a strong public reaction soon forced the government to quickly cover up its position by claiming there were no plans to turn over any colonies under mandate.

But the appeasers refused to set aside the colony question and Hitler permitted the liberals to push the issue for him. German politicians even suggested that the return of their colonies might lessen the pressure for more "lebensraum," and a leading British newspaper claimed that the "unequal" possession of colonies was a threat to peace. When the Chamberlain government indicated it would discuss the status of the colonies and Hitler said he would talk about it, the appeasers said it showed that he was willing to resort to reason rather than to force. The French, however, wanted to relate the question to economic matters but Chamberlain, to show Britain's friendly and understanding attitude, wanted to go further by turning Tanganyika back to Germany. That made the supporters of the Empire angry, and when it was reported that only a discussion had been considered, the government was accused of being willing to make concessions to the Germans.

However, by 1937 Hitler again was demanding the return of Germany's colonies. The *Times* said that in Britain, unlike in France, there was little interest in surrounding Germany with antagonistic neighbors and using the League to prevent her expansion. *The Illustrated London News* called for a "negotiated settlement," and

Chamberlain made it clear to the Germans that Britain would consider concessions to maintain friendly relations. Meanwhile, the Germans insisted that Britain should bring the unwilling French around to agreement. By then the appeasers had built the issue up as if it stood between the world and peace itself and they did not intend for France to "muck" it up. Eden, however, continued to insist that if there was to be an agreement it should at least improve the security of Britain in exchange for German colonies. But Chamberlain's government was determined it would avoid war and maintain peace by making a deal with the Nazi dictator.

The attitude of the British people, however, had begun to change. The more fanatical Hitler became the more Britain's leaders developed serious concerns about the Nazi's brutal conduct and aggressive threats. Public support increased for demanding military restrictions on Germany before agreeing to talk about her colonies and Eden called for talks only after assurances from Hitler that his neighbors' rights would be respected. Still the compromisers continued to dictate British policy and, unfortunately, to set the course of history. Then Chamberlain decided that he would not talk about Tanganyika, and instead presented Hitler with a proposal that certain African colonies be redistributed. In a "cynical display of self-interest," the English asked the Germans not to reveal the proposal to France, Belgium and Portugal since it involved the redistribution of African colonies in which the British had no interest. The unpredictable Fuehrer, however, suddenly declared that he was no longer concerned about the colonies which greatly disturbed the appeasers. By then he was preoccupied with a much more politically important acquisition and he said he was not about to be distracted nor "bought off" by Great Britain's generous offer of colonies belonging to others.

Chamberlain and the appeasers were still trying to pull off a deal with Hitler when the world was shocked by the sudden German occupation of Austria in 1938. It was an alarming international crisis, yet the risk of armed confrontation was not even considered by the West since there was little sympathy for Austria which had been their enemy in World War I. The world had been warned by Hitler when he publicly announced in his *Mein Kampf* that every means would be taken to reunite Germany and Austria. Meanwhile, terror tactics by Nazi thugs had been underway for months when the Austrian Chancellor Englebert Dollfuss was murdered in 1934. Moreover, the new partnership between

Mussolini and Hitler had surrounded Austria with an obvious danger to her independence, and it had become apparent that the appeasements of Chamberlain and the British government, together with the serious political crises in France, had left Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg no alternative but to appease Adolf Hitler. Under the pretense of discussing Schuschnigg's conditions at Berchtesgaden, the dictator used bullying and frightening threats and shouted that France and England would not "raise one finger for Austria," and that whoever was not with him would be "crushed." Then, without further discussion, he demanded official recognition of the Nazi Party in Austria, amnesty for all members of the party, and the appointment of Nazis as Ministers of Police and War. Schuschnigg knew it would be a "death warrant" for Austria, but knowing that the German army was at the border ready to march into Austria and having seen that Britain and France were unwilling to threaten retaliation to oppose Hitler's aggressions, he had no choice but to yield to the ultimatum. With the Nazi control of the police, the streets of Austria were quickly taken over, Schuschnigg was forced to resign, and the infamous Nazi Arthur Seyss-Inquart became Chancellor. The fact was that Austria did not capitulate to the Germans until it was apparent that there would be no help from Britain and France, and as Austrian President Wilhelm Miklas complained, Austria had been abandoned "both at home and abroad."

The combined armed power of France and Britain would still have been more than adequate to have backed-up threats to militarily oppose Germany's aggression against Austria. And it should have been completely apparent to them that if Hitler succeeded in his second aggression without opposition, he would believe he could continue to make further aggressions and that, inevitably, only another war could stop him from conquering all of Europe. Clearly with each successful occupation German manpower and territorial resources would become more powerful and aggressive, and war would become increasingly inevitable with the Western powers no longer holding a military advantage. But even had they been inclined to act, France was without a government and by the time a new government was installed, the Germans had taken control of Austria, and Great Britain was ruled by the appeasers. Totally ignoring reality, Chamberlain claimed that the Fuehrer's ultimatum to Austria from Berchtesgaden had been merely an agreement to improve relations between two countries. The truth was that Hitler

had been advised in advance by Ribbentrop, after a meeting with Lord Halifax, "that England will do nothing in regard to Austria." While Germany annexed Austria on March 12, 1938, adding substantial manpower and resources to its war-making capacity and vastly increasing its political leverage, the most that Great Britain would do was to lodge a weak diplomatic protest. But those who understood the insatiable appetite of the successful aggressor, however, warned that Prague would be next for the fanatic Fuehrer.

Of equal importance with the annexation of Austria, Adolf Hitler had successfully surrounded much of Czechoslovakia and its large Sudetenland German population. Hitler had worried what the substantial military strength of the Czechs might do when he moved into Austria and he had sought assurance that there would be no armed reaction. In the absence of any demonstration of resistance from the West, and realizing the difficult strategic position German encirclement created, the Czechs knew they stood alone and they had little choice but to attempt to appease the aggressive dictator. Accordingly, Hitler had been assured there would be no Czech mobilization. The Czechs also knew that they had been unable to use the threat of armed assistance from Russia, Britain and France as their only hope of forcing Hitler to reconsider his aggression against Austria. In perhaps the worst faux pas of the pre-war era, Chamberlain had demonstrated not only that Britain was unwilling to engage in joint military threats against Germany but that, according to author Shirer, he would also not "concert with the other Big Powers about halting Germany's future moves." Incredibly, he had encouraged Hitler's further aggression by volunteering that Britain would not guarantee to assist Czechoslovakia if she were attacked by Germany, nor would Britain assist France who was bound to Czechoslovakia for mutual assistance by treaty. When the new state of Czechoslovakia had been created by the Treaty of Versailles, it had been an obvious questionable and controversial arrangement. Woodrow Wilson's renowned Fourteen Points, which the Versailles treaty was supposed to be based upon, had called for the establishment of independent nations out of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire and specified that all territorial claims were to be settled "in the interests of the populations concerned." Czechoslovakia had not only been formed by putting together a number of "impossible" minority groups, but it had also created a large, incompatible and aggressive German population within its borders which remained loyal and

attached to Germany. Nonetheless, the Czech government had acted in the best democratic tradition without discrimination against its minorities. Furthermore, good and friendly ties had been made with Great Britain and France with whom Czechoslovakia had been bound in a military alliance since 1925.

In 1937 the Nazi sympathizer Conrad Heinlein, the leader of the Sudeten Germans, visited England and spoke of the problems of the Sudeten population. He found immediate and substantial support among the privileged "do-gooders" and leaders of public opinion who considered it to be politically correct to be concerned about the rights of such an "oppressed" minority. Soon public criticism of the Czechs began to appear and unjustified attacks were made against Czechoslovakia. But the French, having maintained close relations with the new state since it was created at Versailles, knew there was no basis for the criticism and agitation by the Germans over discrimination in the Sudetenland.

Suddenly in May 1938, a new international crisis had erupted when German plans for an attack on Czechoslovakia leaked out and much of the world was shocked at the prospect of another unprovoked invasion by Germany. Although twelve German divisions had been placed on the Czech border, Hitler claimed that he had no aggressive intentions towards Czechoslovakia and that the rumors of German armed aggression were untrue. But the frightened Czechs responded by ordering a partial mobilization. Then the Fuehrer further assured the world that he had no aggressive intentions towards Czechoslovakia and the rumors of German armed forces at the Czech border were false. Several days later, as he raged over the idea that such a small and insignificant "polyglot" country should attempt to resist his invincible power, he informed his generals of his "unalterable decision to smash Czechoslovakia."

By this time many people in Germany and most of the generals had become alarmed by, and opposed to, the brutal Nazi gangsterism. Hitler's emotional arousal of the people, the Nazi total manipulation of the media, the saturation of false propaganda, the absolute control and violation of law, successive armed aggression against neighboring states, and the prospect of another catastrophic war for Germany greatly worried many Germans who found there was little they could do about it. By February 1938, Hitler's control had become so absolute that when he seized total command of Germany's armed forces, the opportunity for successful organized opposition had been practically eliminated. The armed

and brutal acquisition of absolute dictatorial power by Adolf Hitler has been called the most grave and crucial development in German history, for it meant that the revolution of the National Socialists had been completed, and from that point onwards the German nation was committed to a war of aggressive barbarism and death such as the world had never known.

The British "peacemakers," however, would not be deterred and began to urge the Czechs to work out a settlement with the minority Germans in the interest of avoiding an international conflict. The Czech government soon realized that Hitler's purpose was to incite an uprising which would bring about the "voluntary" secession of the Sudetens. When the Czechs sought to determine the implication of their treaty with France under such circumstances, they were assured that the conditions for joint military action would be fulfilled "if the aggression is certain." Vansittart also informed Heinlein that if Hitler attacked Czechoslovakia, Britain would stand with France. At the same time Chamberlain, desperate to avoid a showdown with the dictator, suggested to Heinlein that peaceful change might accomplish the same ends as the use of force. Foolishly, the formulation of a firm policy by the British government was avoided and, consequently, the fatal implications of appeasement were overlooked or ignored. It should have been obvious that Hitler, after his successful aggression against Austria, would assume that he was either invincible or that the decadent democracies had not the courage to oppose him. Consequently, statesmanship was sacrificed to expediency and the "Gods of War" once again were permitted, without resistance, to seize control of the destiny of mankind and to cast it into another mad orgy of death and destruction.

Meanwhile, British and French government leaders were willing to do no more to resolve the crisis than to ask the poor Czechs to make more concessions to the Sudetens with the implied threat that unless they did so, German demands for autonomy would be supported. The Czechs were fully aware that independence for the Sudeten area was tantamont to "suicide" for Czechoslovakia which forced them to object to further interventions by Britain and France. The appeasers insisted, however, that the creation of autonomy "within" the state would avoid armed conflict and should be accepted by the Czechs. Then unexpectedly, a new Popular government not liked by the British, took over in France and could not decide what to do about Czechoslovakia. The French asked Britain

what it would do if Germany attacked Czechoslovakia, and they were shocked to learn that the British were not prepared to take any military action. When the British insisted there could be no consideration of a settlement without German participation, the French refused saying that would only make Hitler more demanding. They also objected to Britain's encouragement of German minority rights which, they believed, would offend the Czechs and create a precedent in other countries with German minorities.

The French also wanted the League of Nations to handle the situation but the British not only refused further cooperation with France, but turned down a Soviet initiative to consider joint action with the Russo-French alliance. Still, the Chamberlain government was determined to collaborate with Germany and the appeasers proposed a European Conference to resolve the Czech question. Actually, Britain had been historically opposed to European entanglements and Neville Chamberlain had been against the League of Nations with its commitments for multi-national cooperative action. So the appeasers, not wanting to become involved with either France nor Russia, believed Britain had no obligation of any kind to Czechoslovakia, and there was considerable sympathy against the encirclement of Germany by "hostility." Encouraged by Western disagreement, and supported by Hitler's intentions, the Sudetens moved away from "autonomy" toward outright union with the Third Reich.

Once again the tragedy of appeasement was repeated when the French refused to use their "will and the means" to block Germany's continuing threat of military force because the British refused to agree that if France fought German aggression, they would also fight. As a consequence, yet another French government fell. Furthermore, the British appeasers, by their refusal to participate in the alliance between Russia and France, had not only disabled French determination to resist further German aggression but, undoubtedly, influenced the Soviet fatal decision to abandon the West and to make a pact with the Nazis. Without question, British appeasement was largely responsible for causing the West to lose the only hopeful opportunity to save Czechoslovakia and Poland, to have enforced an end to Adolf Hitler's aggressions, to bring about an end to the Nazi dictators's control of Germany, and for the world to have avoided World War II.

When the new French leaders Edourd Daladier and Georges Bonnet came to London in May 1938, the British believed they had, at last, a French government

that would go along with their concessions to Germany. The French agreed to jointly pressure Prague, but the British refused to accept the French request to take a strong stand against the Germans if they refused a new Czech proposal. While Britain's compromisers considered military opposition to be out of the question, the French continued to press for the use of force to honor their commitment to the Czechs. The Germans, of course, knew all about the disagreements between them. Then the "peace-at-any-price" advocates next attempted to develop "unity for peace" by Britain, Germany and the United States and, by that time, even the French had been worn down to believe that "any arrangement" was better than war in which "both victor and vanquished would fall victim to world Communism." Finally, an agreement was reached to pressure the Czechs to negotiate with the Germans. In other words, the appeasers had won and two of the world's great powers, in what was considered to be an infamous cowardly act, destined another small country to liquidation by the Nazis.

In the meantime, Neville Henderson had informed the Germans at Berlin that France was "acting" for the Czechs and Britain was "supporting" Germany. The Germans responded by promising that once the Sudeten problem was resolved there would be no further important issue, other than the colonial question, in which they were concerned. The Germans were then advised that if they would inform the British what they wanted from the Czechs, the British would pressure Prague to agree. Then, to avoid the danger of another war, British newspapers began to call for the outright annexation of the Sudetenland by Germany and stated that Britain would not fight for Czechoslovakia. The poor Czechs were being left with no choice but to sacrifice their freedom and independence..

By this time the British had involved themselves into Czech affairs so often that it was reported that the Germans were "embarrassed" by the excessive initiatives of British apologists. The French had begun to refer to Chamberlin as "Monsieur J'aime Berlin." The "peacemakers" believed the Czech crisis was an unique opportunity to improve Anglo-German relations and to preserve world peace. They suggested that independent observers should investigate incidents in the Sudeten which might threaten the peace, but the Germans opposed it. Still the appeasers continued to seek an important role for Britain by proposing whatever initiatives Germany might support that was described as a "double game" of "condoning in private" while "protesting in public." The influence of

the collaborators became so strong in the government that it became difficult for the protesters to be heard.

Soon, through contacts with various representatives of the British government, Hitler became convinced that Britain, rather than risk war, would go along with his aims for a Greater Germany, and would accept annexation of the Sudetenland. Chamberlain, having decided that further negotiations might fail, considered steps to pressure the Czechs to meet Hitler's demands, but when the Germans learned a British emissary would be sent to talk to the Czechs, they objected. The greatest mistake of Chamberlain and the appeasers involved their repeated failure to understand that when a bully is prepared to resort to force to fulfill his aggressive ambitions only the threat of an equal or superior counterforce, backed up by the willingness to use it, can effectively deter an eventual violent conflict. They refused to acknowledge that negotiations were never an option regarding Adolf Hitler's determination to conquer all of Europe and, eventually, the world as well. Instead, they were distressed not so much because they had failed to negotiate a settlement of the Sudeten crisis as they were frustrated over their inability to establish better relations with Germany.

Innumerable British representatives from the public, as well as the government, continued to visit Berlin informing the Germans that the future of Europe depended upon cooperation between Great Britain and Germany, that if war occurred between them only "Bolshevism would profit," and that once the Czech issue was disposed of, their peaceful and prosperous relationship could be developed for the future. But the Germans insisted nothing could be settled until the Czech crisis was resolved. That led the British to suggest that a "special envoy" should present the Fuehrer with a proposal for a "peaceful and generous settlement" and, if successful, could be followed by negotiations between Britain and France with Germany and Italy. The conference would take place in Munich and the Czechs would be ignored. Chamberlain's associates naively believed that they would simply "brush aside the resistance" of the French and Czechs and obtain an agreement with Adolf Hitler which would preserve peace in Europe. The Germans, however, arrogantly replied that there could be no agreement which would leave Czechoslovakia intact. Whereas the original German proposal had offered either Sudeten autonomy within Czechoslovakia or a plebiscite for

incorporation of Sudeten into Germany, now the Nazi dictator had been encouraged by the West to continue to bully and bluff them for all that he could get.

On August 18 General Ewald von Kleist, one of the conspirators against Hitler, visited London and met with Vansittart and Churchill. He advised them that Hitler had set a date for the attack on Czechoslovakia, that most of the German generals would act against him to avoid war, and that any further appeasement of Hitler by Britain would destroy opposition efforts against the Nazis. He pleaded that if a public declaration was made warning Hitler that an armed attack on the Czechs would bring about the involvement of Britain and France, then the generals would move against Hitler. Chamberlain instructed Henderson to warn Hitler accordingly, and to establish a secret "personal contact" between the Prime Minister and the Fuehrer. Henderson, however, convinced Chamberlain it would be unwise to confront Hitler with such a warning claiming it would damage their efforts to build better relations with Germany. Chamberlain agreed and the warning was dropped. Incredibly, the most favorable opportunity to overthrow Adolf Hitler and to avoid the war was stupidly bungled by Chamberlain and Henderson. Consequently, there was no coup by the generals and it was, according to one authority, "Hitler's greatest bloodless victory."

The only reasonable explanation as to how Henderson was able to pass so much biased and misleading information to London from Berlin was that it was what the Chamberlain government wanted to believe. In any event, it greatly supported and increased the prevailing attitude of compromising appeasement which would lead to the most disastrous consequences in British history—the liquidation of the British Empire and the relegation of Great Britain to the status of a second-class power! And on August 30, 1938, Henderson made the colossal error of advising the Cabinet that the Germans had no plans to use force against Czechoslovakia. He also informed the Germans that the Sudeten-Czech problem was of no interest to Britain whose main concern was the lack of cooperation by the French. Meanwhile, Baron Ernst von Weizsacker had warned the British that Hitler planned to move into Czechoslovakia within six weeks, and that many Germans felt that the only way to stop him was for the British to tell him that it would mean war with Germany. Foreign Secretary Halifax sent the warning to Henderson who refused to present it to Hitler, fearing it would be a provocation, and Chamberlain and his Cabinet refused to instruct Henderson to deliver the

warning to Hitler. In the meantime, in London the *Times* began a campaign which demanded that the Czechs turn over the Sudetenland to the Germans in the cause of world peace.

The Fuehrer's increasing threats of aggression against the Czechs continued to concern Soviet Russia and its mutual assistance treaty with Czechoslovakia. On September 2, the Soviets asked for talks with France and Britain to warn Hitler not to use force against the Czechs and to consider Russia's proposal to take the question to the League of Nations, but the French were opposed. Then after acts of violence began to occur along the borders of the Sudetenland, tensions throughout Europe increased rapidly, and the British Labor Party declared that the government should join with France and Russia to oppose any further aggression against the Czechs.

Meanwhile, Hitler's rabble-rousing speeches began to stir-up riots in the Sudeten and, as the crisis continued to escalate, Chamberlain's advisor Horace Wilson and Henderson suggested that Chamberlain should go to see the Fuehrer to save the peace. Since French efforts to stand with the Czechs had gained little British cooperation, Daladier and Bonnet were forced to soften their position by strong Leftist opposition. They finally agreed to go along with the British initiative but felt they could no longer take the lead. By then the public fear over becoming involved in another war had begun to dominate French politics and appeasement took command of national policy. In the meantime, Hitler secretly planned to attack the Czechs by October 1, 1938 and Nazi-incited riots in the Sudetenland indicated that the German invasion might occur soon. Again, as just before World War I, Europe had become a powder-keg ready to explode and a general fear rapidly spread that war would soon breakout. Apprehension was so great in Paris that when Hitler demanded that the Sudeten be ceded to Germany, the French cabinet cowardly refused to honor its commitment to stand with the Czechs if attacked by Germany. Consequently, Daladier pleaded with Chamberlain to make the best deal possible with Hitler.

Chamberlain then decided that he should go to Germany to see Hitler and the Fuehrer was both flattered and amused that a British Prime Minister would come to see him when he knew that neither Britain nor France could offer him anything that could save Czechoslovakia from occupation. Furthermore, Chamberlain knew that he had nothing to offer Adolf Hitler except more con-

cessions on the fate of the unfortunate Czechs. However, the Prime Minister really believed that if his mission could succeed, it would save Europe from another horrible and devastating war. Quite mistakenly, many of his fellow Britons expected him to warn Germany that if Czechoslovakia was attacked there would be war with Britain and France. Both views were wrong. The truth was that Chamberlain had knuckled under to the Nazi Leader and would be seen by much of the world as the British Prime Minister who went to Adolf Hitler "with his hat in his hand," not only willing to sacrifice Czechoslovakia, but had been agreeable to almost anything to avoid war with Germany.

When Chamberlain and Hitler met for the first time at Berchtesgaden on February 12, 1938, it became even more apparent to the Germans that France and Britain would not stand behind the defenseless Czechs. The dictator, of course, dominated the conversation demanding that the Czech problem be solved by the "return" of three million Germans to the Reich, and while he was willing to resort to war to bring it about, he would agree to discuss the possibility of a "peaceful settlement." When asked if Britain would agree to a "secession on the basis of the right of self-determination," Chamberlain answered that he recognized "the principle of the detachment of the Sudeten areas," but the agreement of his Cabinet was required. Hitler had been alerted that the British Prime Minister would actually propose Sudeten unity with Germany, so the Germans were not surprised at Chamberlain's quick submission as the Fuehrer agreed not to take any military action until they met again. And the fate of Czechoslovakia had been predetermined. Literally, she had been sacrificed by her "friends and allies," while millions of the innocent people of Europe were thrust into the horrific continuation of a worldwide war which had never ended. After Munich, Hitler boasted that once he had seen what "worms" his opponents were, he knew he could get whatever he wanted.

Back in London, Chamberlain and his top officials were determined to convince the French to join in their policy of compromise and surrender, and a meeting was held with Daladier and his associates to discuss "self-determination" for the Sudetens. The French believed a plebiscite would only encourage further German aggression but agreed to consider a cessation provided the British would join them in guarantees to the Czechs. They wanted it understood, however, that if France lost Czechoslovakia as an ally, then Britain would have to face the

responsibility of further Nazi aggressions. Authors Gilbert and Gott contend that "Chamberlain's policy was to allow Germany a free hand in Eastern Europe and since he had no interest in giving guarantees to the Czechs which would only obstruct his policy, Britain was unwilling to defend Czechoslovakia." Later, the French and British agreed to modified guarantees for the Sudeten areas over fifty percent German to be transferred to the Reich either directly or by plebiscite, and that the United Kingdom would support an international guarantee of the remaining Czech borders against unprovoked aggression.

The British Cabinet, however, had many reservations about the proposal believing it unlikely that a much weaker Czechoslovakia could survive. There was much concern that the Poles and the Hungarians had been encouraged by Hitler to demand return of the remaining "minority" sections of Czechoslovakia which had been taken from them at Versailles, and there was much uncertainty as to how the Western guarantees could be enforced. Furthermore, it was very doubtful that the Czechs would agree to the proposal. And lastly, it was feared that Adolf Hitler would only be encouraged to make additional aggressive moves against his neighbors.

As the desperate Czechs stood practically alone, they were soon assaulted by demands from the Poles and Hungarians for plebiscites on the return of their minorities. Then the poor Czechs found themselves hopelessly trapped when the British and French flatly informed them that the joint Anglo-French proposal was the "only means of averting war and the invasion of Czechoslovakia;" that unless she agreed Britain and France would be divided in that the British "would not march;" that under such circumstances France would be unable to meet her treaty obligations to aid Czechoslovakia; and the Czechs would have to take the full responsibility for war. Having been left no alternative, the battered and forsaken Czech government was forced by her "friends" to yield to the enemy, and the Czech government immediately fell.

The British Prime Minister humbled himself further by rushing back to Godesberg and presented the aggressive Nazi leader with the latest Anglo-French appeasement proposal. The Fuehrer, now believing that he could do whatever he wished because the British had lost their will and would not fight, and seeing that he could now get all of Czechoslovakia, said he could no longer accept the proposal. In fact, he added, there could be no peace until the demands of the

Poles and Hungarians were resolved, and demanded that the Czech problem be settled by October 1st. Chamberlain then restated the British and French position in writing. In the meantime, being informed that the Germans were ready to march into Czechoslovakia and that the Czechs were preparing to mobilize, London and Paris believed that Europe was on the brink of war. Finally, Lord Halifax had become disillusioned with the failures of appeasement and he telephoned Chamberlain that public opinion had reached the "limit of concession," and insisted on an appropriate response from Germany. He also stressed that if Hitler rejected a peaceful solution resulting in war, it would be "an unpardonable crime against humanity." But Hitler's response to Chamberlain's letter demanded that the Czechs withdraw their military, police and customs officials from the Sudeten areas, and he attached a map showing the areas in which a plebiscite had to be held which a German-Czech Commission would administer. In his final meeting with the dictator, Chamberlain branded the response as an "ultimatum and not a negotiation," but nonetheless, forwarded Hitler's counter-proposal to the Czechs.

Nonetheless, the British Prime Minister was still determined to have his peace and when he returned to London he recommended that his Cabinet accept Hitler's terms and advise the Czechs to accept them. Duff Cooper opposed him strongly saying it was bad enough having just a choice of peace "with dishonor or war," but it had also become "war with dishonor." As it should have been expected, the Czechs rejected Hitler's demands again. That upset the British government which held that it had been "premature" and ruined all hope of negotiation to prevent war. Chamberlain next attempted to persuade the French from any intention to go to war over Czechoslovakia and pressed them to learn what their response would be if Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia. Daladier said flatly that they would fulfill their treaty obligation to declare war and attack Germany. Chamberlain then tried to coerce the French by pointing out that would bring about German retaliation with attacks on France including the bombing of Paris. Daladier, however, refused to be frightened.

The British pacifiers continued to believe that the avoidance of war depended upon them and Horace Wilson was sent back to Hitler with an appeal that the Czechs and British negotiate the "transfer" of the Sudeten, and if Hitler refused, to threaten that Britain and France would give the Czechs a mutual defense

agreement. Talks with France were resumed and the French were informed of Wilson's mission. But when Wilson told Hitler of the proposed tri-level talks, he reacted violently saying that the German minority would be free whether "by negotiation or by force," then he threatenly advanced the deadline for final action from October 1 to September 28. When the Nazi Leader told Wilson that it appeared that Czechoslovakia was more important to the British than Germany, he was told that Britain would continue its efforts to reach a "sensible" Sudeten settlement. Hitler's "final concession" offering a German guarantee for Czechoslovakia after the cessation was taken back to London.

As Hitler's public attacks on the Czechs became increasingly violent, Chamberlain became convinced it would be hopeless to obtain another compromise from Czechoslovakia. Finally, believing that the British government was "morally responsible" to see that the Czechs would comply if the German government would agree to terms by "discussion and not by force," the Prime Minister began to develop further proposals without consulting the Czechs. Again, Churchill, Eden, and Vansittart were contacted by Hitler's opponents in Germany pleading that if Britain and France would stand firm and warn Hitler of resistance, he would go no further towards war. But with the approach of Hitler's deadline, instead of heeding Hitler's enemies in Germany, Chamberlain's government produced yet another concession. It agreed to the German occupation of the two Sudeten areas of Egerland and Asch outside the Czech fortified defensive line with a German, British and Czech Boundary Commission to arrange for the withdrawal of Czech troops and police, safeguarding of minorities, settlement of frontiers, entry of German troops, negotiations for the demobilization or withdrawal of troops, revision of treaties, and guarantees for the boundaries of the new Czechoslovakia.

But as the appeasers began to realize that they stood on the very brink of war, their resistance to further compromises began to strengthen at last. While frantic last-minute efforts continued to avoid armed conflict, and realizing that premature incidents might set-off a conflagration, Halifax asked that the French take no "offensive" action without consultation and agreement. Then when Wilson returned from Berlin he advised that there was no alternative left but "to advise the Czechs to evacuate the territory." Consequently, Duff-Cooper, as First Lord of the Admiralty, ordered mobilization of the British Navy. In a desperate effort

to help avoid war, President Franklin Roosevelt intervened on the evening before Hitler's deadline by proposing a Conference of "nations directly interested" in Europe, but he was ignored. The French made one last attempt to appease the aggressor and, without the knowledge of their Czech ally, they proposed to the Germans that they occupy not only the Bohemian quadrilateral but also districts with Czech fortifications, and that if the Germans agreed, the French would demand Czech compliance. Then, if the Czechs disagreed, it would be their responsibility for war. Many other hurried efforts were made to avoid an armed conflict which appeared imminent, including Chamberlain's last minute appeal to Hitler and Mussolini that he was confident an agreement on the transfer of the Sudeten could be reached and that he would come to Berlin at once. By that time, most of the British were so distressed at the prospect of war that when Chamberlain announced that Hitler and Mussolini had agreed to meet with him the next day at Munich, he was roundly cheered by a standing Parliament that believed their Prime Minister would save world peace. Only Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden, Duff Cooper, and a few others remained in their seats.

Chamberlain arrived at Munich on September 29 determined to work out a compromise with Adolf Hitler. He had Wilson with him, Daladier was accompanied by foreign affairs specialist Alexis Leger, the Czechs had agreed to be present, and Hitler and Mussolini were backed up by their Foreign Ministers. An agreement largely restating Hitler's Godesberg demands had been drafted by the Germans, and while it had been rejected by the Czechs, it was welcomed by Britain and France who had been led to believe it was a "compromise" submitted by Mussolini. As the discussion began, it was suggested that the Czechs should participate, which brought forth a furious objection by the Fuehrer, and when Chamberlain asked questions on details in the proposal, Hitler had shouted no time was to be wasted on "trivialities." Then, cowardly and quickly, the "allies" of Czechoslovakia signed an agreement giving Adolf Hitler just about everything he wanted. In one of the most tragic and disgraceful acts in history, the leaders of both Great Britain and France, without the knowledge or the agreement of the Czechs, willfully approved the criminal extinction of a democratic government which they themselves had created at Versailles.

Shockingly, the Nazi dictator had won another astounding victory for Germany without having fired a shot. And most dreadfully, the opposition

against Hitler in Germany was dealt a mortal blow. The civilians and the military that opposed Hitler, who represented Germany's only realistic hope for democracy, had lost their last reasonable opportunity to rid Germany of its Nazi gangsters. Before the world the Western nations had "chickened out," the Soviet Union had been out-flanked by the German dictator, and now Adolf Hitler was more convinced than ever that he could successfully expand the Greater German Reich with little risk until he controlled adequate military power to conquer as much of Europe as he wished. Now the world stood in awe of the invincible power of the rearmed Fatherland and the German people were "delirious with the incomparable genius of their beloved Fuehrer."

After the shameful Munich agreement was signed, the Germans and Italians left the conference room and the Czech representatives were brought in for the British and the French to inform them of the consequences of the "negotiations." They were told that the agreement required Czechoslovakia to evacuate the Sudetenland at once to permit occupation by the German Army on October 1, and that if they refused to do so, they would have to fight the Germans alone. When the Czechs asked for time for a reply from their government, they were told no answer was required, that the agreement was regarded as "accepted" by Czechoslovakia, and that their representative was to be sent immediately to Berlin to work out the details. Afterwards, Chamberlain proudly believing he had preserved world peace, and having foolishly accepted the dictator's promise that there would be no more German aggressions, presented the Fuehrer a statement recognizing the importance of Anglo-German relations with the desire never to make war upon each other and pledging to maintain British-German cooperation in Europe. Hitler quickly signed what he considered to be mere political propaganda. He knew that agreements to statements of support for democratic goals and principles were a simple and inexpensive means to pacify, disarm and/or neutralize the enemy while buying time for new opportunities to attain the goals of Nazism.

Chamberlain and Daladier happily returned home "in triumph." Photographs of Neville Chamberlain holding his declaration of peace signed by Adolf Hitler appeared throughout the world, and his statement that "I believe it is peace in our time" became one of the most popular quotes of the time. The *Times* in London headlined that no conquering hero had "nobler laurels." But

Duff Cooper resigned from the Cabinet, and Winston Churchill was jeered in Parliament when he called it "a total and unmitigated defeat...All the countries of Mittel Europe...will be drawn in the vast system of Nazi politics...It is only the beginning." Paul Reynaud and George Mandel resigned from the French Cabinet and "seduced and betrayed" Czechoslovakia protested before the world that they had been abandoned and that, standing alone, they had no choice but to surrender before the brutal power of Germany. Undoubtedly, it was one of the most dishonorable and shameful instances ever to occur in the history of international relations. Britain and France, selfishly and cold-heartedly, intentionally and literally, sacrificed a small innocent and sovereign democratic state to avoid their potential involvement in an armed struggle to preserve the principles of national freedom and independence from brutal aggression. More than any other event preceding World War II, the selfish and cowardly desertion of the Czechs by Britain and France was responsible for the horrible consequences of the Nazi domination of Europe.

It did not take long for Germany to make the most of its ill-gotten gains of Munich. Nazi Germany added 11,000 square miles of territory with 3,600,000 people to strengthen the arms of conquest for the Third Reich. She also acquired most of the substantial industrial capacity of the Czechs, and under continuing threats of armed intervention, the so-called "International Commission" decided in support of Germany on every question including the decision that plebiscites would not be required. Despicably but expectedly, seeing that the Germans got away with it, Poland and Hungary demanded the return of their "minorities" which had also been taken from them at Versailles. While threatening armed aggression against mortally wounded Czechoslovakia, Poland grabbed an area near Teschen with a population of 228,000 and Hungary was awarded territory with almost three-quarters of a million people. That made it a simple matter for the Germans to complete their total control of the divided and defenseless former democracy.

Immediately after Munich, Hitler informed his generals that the occupations of Austria and Czechoslovakia were but forerunners for his campaign for "Lebensraum" (living room) to the east followed by the military annihilation of the French to the west. On October 21 he stated his next objectives: to secure Germany's borders, to annex the Baltic port of Memel ceded from Germany to

Lithuania at Versailles, and to takeover the rest of Czechoslovakia. His plan was to detach Slovakia and to occupy Bohemia and Moravia, and appropriate military orders were issued. In the meantime, the new Czech government was subjected to incessant and impossible demands until finally, Britain and France inquired about the Fuehrer's promise of a guarantee. He replied that Germany awaited internal developments in Czechoslovakia which were already being stirred up by the Nazis. Soon separatists movements began to create disturbances in Slovakia and Ruthenia. When the Czech President dissolved their local governments, arrested their leaders and declared martial law, Hitler brought the Slovak representatives before him, demanded that Slovakia be declared independent from the Czechs and that Germany should takeover its protection. Again, under the threat that German troops were ready to march, Slovakian independence was proclaimed on March 14, 1939.

The final death blow to Czechoslovakia had been struck. Now Hitler was convinced he could get what he wanted without even the risk of war. After Nazi organized street agitations and widespread propaganda against the Czech government, President Hacha was brought before the German dictator and was abused by vicious and false accusations. Then he was informed that German troops had been ordered to attack for the "incorporation of Czechoslovakia into the German Reich," and that his only choice was peace or annihilation for Czechoslovakia. Hearing this, Hacha fainted, was revived to telephone the Czech Cabinet to recommend surrender, then he was forced to sign away his country's freedom. On March 15, German troops marched into Czechoslovakia and at Prague Hitler proclaimed Germany's "Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia." The next day Slovakia was also placed under German protection, then Ruthenia was turned over to Hungary. Dishonorably Britain and France, instead of defending the principles of international law as recognized by civilized nations including the right of self-determination and independence of states, had not only refused to fulfill their commitment to guarantee the existence of a democratic Czechoslovakia, but they actively and willfully assisted Adolf Hitler to violate the freedom of the Czechs. So Czechoslovakia was no more! Once again appeasement had satisfied and encouraged the satanic Fuehrer's lust for aggression against Germany's neighbors.

Still the British Prime Minister, even after such a disastrous consequence of British foreign policy, attempted to use Hitler's betrayal of the Munich agreement to deny responsibility for being bound to any guarantee for Czech independence. And the protests to Hitler's actions were so mild by the British and French governments that they were ignored by the Germans. French Ambassador Robert Coulondre, however, accused the Nazis of violating the French-Anglo declarations, as well as the Munich pact, and by March 18, public distress in both London and Paris became so obvious that stronger protests were made to the Germans. The British called it an illegal repudiation of Munich and the French went even further by refusing to recognize the "German occupation" of Czechoslovakia.

By March 17, as a result of strong public, press and parliamentary opposition, Neville Chamberlain was finally forced to recognize the reality of Hitler's aims and that the people of Britain would accept no more appeasement of Nazism which had placed his continued control of the British government in question. The public now felt that the compromising of the appeasers, which was enabling Adolf Hitler's aggressions to increase the threat to world peace, could no longer be ignored, and that appeasement had not brought about the avoidance of war but had, in fact, greatly increased the prospect of another disastrous conflict. In his next speech, Chamberlain made an about-face by apologizing to the British people, charging that Adolf Hitler had deceived him by breaking his promises and had "taken the law into his own hands." He said that if Germany was intent upon world domination by force, "no greater mistake could be made than to suppose that because it believes war to be a senseless and cruel thing, this nation has so lost its fiber that it will not take part to the utmost of its power in resisting." Finally, even the Germans began to realize that their relations with Britain and France were endangered.

Then it became apparent that Hitler's conquest of Czechoslovakia was the next phase of his conquest of Poland from which he would launch his drive for the east. With the occupation of Czechoslovakia, and from East Prussia, he had acquired a base for aggression which practically surrounded about two-thirds of the Polish state. And having seen that the so-called Western "allies" would back down when he was willing to go to the "brink of war," and that he could get just about whatever he wanted with little or no opposition, he began to increase the

pressure on Poland immediately after the Munich meeting. Eager to get their share of the spoils, the Poles had rushed in to takeover parts of Czechoslovakia. But within a month after Munich, Hitler began to use his Czech presence to make demands on Poland for a "general settlement" of future relations. First, he asked for the return of Danzig and for a highway and railway across Polish territory to connect Danzig with Germany and East Prussia. He also wanted Poland to join the Anti-Commintern Pact against the Soviet Union. In return, Germany would extend its treaty with Poland from ten to twenty years to guarantee her borders. The Poles immediately refused Germany's requests but, as a conciliation, agreed to sign a pact on the free status of Danzig while warning that any effort to take Danzig into the Reich would result in "conflict."

The Fuehrer next ordered preparations for his armed forces to take Danzig "by surprise" with a simultaneous occupation of Memel. He believed that his power and infallibility had been well-established and that the appeasers would have no choice but to give him yet another aggressive success without war. He also knew that the separation of East Prussia from Germany at Versailles, together with the detachment of Danzig, was a great emotional issue to the German people. Since an independent Poland had been recreated at Versailles out of the territory of her two historic enemies, Germany and Russia, Poland's democratic existence had remained threatened. She obviously needed as many friends as possible to help maintain her constant fear that her two powerful neighbors would resort to any means to regain their lost territory and, if possible, repossess all of Poland.

Both Britain and France saw that Germany's occupation of Czechoslovakia had opened new opportunities for further aggressions by Hitler. The map showed that much of Central Europe was now exposed which would likely tempt him to feed his growing appetite for the increase in power that accompanied the acquisition of new territories and resources. But his conquest of the Czechs had broken the back of the "soft-liners," and now the English were "fed-up" with appeasement and there would be no more compromises with the Nazis. When the annexation of Memel occurred, it immediately developed strong

British support for a policy to resist further aggression by the use of force. At last it was generally recognized that the mad Fuehrer had to be stopped before the world was plunged into another war. "Binding" alliances had to be created so

that the dictator could be warned, that if he threatened the use of armed might against another independent state, force would be used against him. Finally, the British appeared to have developed a national determination to fight Nazism and would not "knuckle under" again.

French and British diplomats and politicians soon concluded that Rumanian oil could be the Fuehrer's next target. German troops could easily move into Rumania since the Hungarians would gladly cooperate against their "hostile" neighbor and that created serious concern that Hitler might attempt a "domination by force of the whole of the Danube basis," as well as the occupation of Danzig. The Rumanians, fearing an attack, asked if Britain could be counted on for help? The Foreign Office inquired what other potential allies might do and were told it depended upon what Britain would do? Most states, however, including Britain and France, had to face the reality of the practical difficulty in giving effective aid to any country in Central Europe threatened by Hitler. From the standpoint of accessibility, let alone the state of complicated relations in Europe, the practical possibility of anything more than moral support was unlikely, and Adolf Hitler knew it. Russia represented the only possibility of effective leverage against the Nazis, but the over-riding factor was that the other nations of East Europe feared Soviet Communism even more than German Nazism. So Rumania suggested to the British and the French that Poland, with substantial military forces, would be a strong ally. By this time the British realized, at last, that they had to get off the fence and take a strong stand. They decided they could not desert Rumania and they immediately grasped what has been called "a straw which rapidly became an anchor." British historians observe that the negotiation between the Rumanians and the British was "one of the most important political events of the inter-war years." And it is most disturbing to see that the British actually backed themselves into their most critical foreign policy decision which led directly to the development of the commitment that resulted in the commencement of World War II without realizing the consequences of their action.

From the beginning, Poland's position had been impossible since she knew she could resist neither German nor Russian aggression without the assistance of the other, and that in the process, her freedom would be the price. Over the previous years she had strived for better relations with Germany to offset the con-

stant threat of being swallowed up by the Communist revolution in Russia. As a Christian nation with much Western culture, it appeared that she had much in common with Germany and, because of it, she was not trusted by the French. When the British proposed that Britain, France, Rumania and Russia should join in an alliance with Poland against further German aggression, the Poles and the Rumanians insisted that Russia be left out of the coalition, convinced that an alliance with Russia would result in "immediate action" by Germany against them. Finally, the British were forced to realize they could no longer delay taking a stronger action against Hitler as the only practical way to avoid war. Also, it was apparent that only Poland or Russia would be able to give Rumania armed support, and if not both of them, then at least one of them was needed. Somehow, the British felt they had to find a way to acquire Poland as the only realistic chance of acquiring an ally in the area, in spite of Poland's attitude towards Russia, and not only to help Rumania, but to resist further German aggression.

Lord Halifax developed what he considered to be the resolution of the problem by having France and Britain give the Poles the same guarantee they had asked the Poles to give to Rumania. It was well known that the Poles and the Germans greatest fear was domination by Soviet Communism, so the possibility of military aggression against Poland by Germany was not considered. Without notifying the Parliament, and believing that Poland was in no danger from Hitler, Chamberlain made the offer, and the Poles agreed to consider it, provided the proposal remained secret. What it really meant, without being realized, was that Britain had guaranteed Poland against Germany. The inexcusable consequences of appeasement had led Great Britain to commit probably the greatest blunder in her history—a unilateral commitment to go to war without obtaining a commitment vital to her own national security in return. She had failed to understand the potentially disastrous consequences of her actions and she had done so without recognizing that she was totally unprepared to become involved in another world conflict. The truth, which should have been obvious, was that there was nothing practical that Britain could do to assist Poland against the increasingly powerful German Wehrmacht and Luftwaffe, and there was nothing that Poland could do for Britain. And the ability of an alliance by Poland with Britain, France and Rumania to influence Adolf Hitler was highly questionable? What had been done, as it would turn out, was to permit the policies of appease-

ment to drive Great Britain into a course where the only result would be disaster for the Empire.

Meanwhile, Hitler continued to increase his demands on Poland, tensions grew throughout Europe, and it soon became obvious that the Nazis would invade Poland if she did not yield to Germany's ultimatums. To show the British people his new and tough stand, as well as to show Hitler that he would not again be deceived, Chamberlain publicly revealed his commitment to the Poles saying that if the Germans attacked Poland, then Britain "would at once lend all the support in their power." The desperate Poles, however, still would not openly accept the agreement, not wishing to provoke the German Fuehrer into any aggressive action, and they insisted there were no important disagreements between Germany and Poland. But Hitler rapidly became more hostile and Chamberlain feared a German attack on Poland would involve Britain in war. Accordingly, he asked the Poles about the possibility of help by Russia and was told that any such agreement would certainly result in an attack on Poland by Germany. Then the Poles revealed they could not give Rumania a guarantee, which would offend the Hungarians, and they could do nothing against the Germans with whom they still had good relations. The isolated Poles were hopelessly trapped. They had nothing to give for help, yet without help, it would be the end of Poland. They could only resort to their last weapon—bluff, against both East and West. Then suddenly, the British Prime Minister was shocked to realize he had given Poland a commitment to go to war and yet Britain had gained nothing in return.

Try as he might, Chamberlain could not breakdown the position of the "stubborn" Poles, but in an attempt to get a commitment in return from the Poles, he suggested his "temporary unilateral assurance" be made into a "permanent and reciprocal agreement" which would provide help in the event either was subjected to aggression. Duff Cooper was appalled that his government would permit such a small power to decide whether Britain would become involved in war. Churchill said it was "wrong judgments by well-meaning people" who uselessly wasted Britain's influence for years, and led France to join in a senseless guarantee to Poland. He charged that during the Czech crisis even a modest military countermove against the weak German defenses in the West would have carried British and French troops across the Rhine and occupied Germany's industrial

lifeline in the Ruhr. Surprisingly, it seemed to many that Great Britain had suddenly swung from being, as it would later be called, "peace-niks" to "war-hawks." Others in Europe believed that Britain had tied herself up "in the worst possible place at the most unfavorable time" and that unimaginable disaster would follow.

On April 3 Hitler, with Germany surrounding most of Poland, ordered his armed forces to prepare for a surprise attack by September 1, 1939, a deadline which would be met for his next move of aggression that would setoff the most awful catastrophe in history. He rapidly increased the pressure on Poland even though, unlike his previous aggressions, he now knew that the French and the British had agreed with the Poles to resist any military moves against them. British and French appeasement had convinced him that they would not risk war to help Poland, and even if they dared to do so, there was little they could do to help Poland militarily before his "blitzkrieg" would destroy her. Furthermore, by September 1939 his forces in the west would be strong enough to hold off any counterattacks until Poland had been quickly overcome, then his forces could be deployed on the western front before Britain and France could mobilize and launch any effective counteraction.

The Nazi Leader had no doubt about the outcome of a war with the West. By then it was obvious that he would have to defeat Britain and France, to prevent a "two-front" war, before he could complete the destiny of the "Thousand Year Reich" by fulfilling its need for space lying to the east. He had only one fear, that his greatest ultimate enemy, the Soviet Union, might strike him from the rear as he occupied himself with the defeat of the West. Russia had to be neutralized until the elimination of the Western enemies after which the Soviet Union would also be eliminated. The Hitler-Stalin Pact was essential for the fulfillment of his grand design for the conquest of the decadent democracies in the West, then he would enforce the annihilation of the "inferior" Slavic peoples to the east.

By then the policy of appeasement had run its course. It had involved the worst possible consequences of excessive compromise, lack of courage, refusal to face reality, desire to take the easy way out, and outright cowardice in the face of obvious evil, all of which under the circumstances made war inevitable! As Harold Nicolson had put it, "physical relief" had been placed before "moral anxiety." It was, in fact, a betrayal of the millions of British and French soldiers and people who suffered and died for democratic principles in the previous war. It

also was an admission of the weakness and incompetence of moral character in Britain and France. Once again a fatal historical blunder was committed by the belief that reason can prevail over emotional prejudice, vengeance, and fanaticism. It was also a recognition of, and compromise with, the use of force while choosing to ignore the violation of individual human rights and the rights of nations to self-determination and independence. And not least, the war-resisters were falsely convinced that they were saving mankind from another world war! Winston Churchill said it was a sudden and inexcusable reversal of British policy of "easy-going placatory appeasement" to a "readiness to accept an obviously imminent war" under impossible conditions unparalleled in history.

The defenders of appeasement argue that neither Britain nor France could have successfully opposed Germany militarily in 1938, and that the diplomatic postponement of the conflict for one year enabled them to substantially boost their military capability. While it seemed to have made little difference for France, in the case of Britain surely the production of new aircraft provided them that meagre margin which made it possible for them to barely survive the Luftwaffe onslought during the Battle of Britain. On the other hand, if Britain and France had not appeased Hitler's earlier transgressions, the war could have been avoided altogether.

The blame for the appeasement of Germany, however, cannot be placed entirely upon Britain and France. It began at Versailles as a consequence of the French spirit of vengeance which resulted in the imposition of conditions from which most nations would have been compelled to seek, if not demand, the restitution of their national "honor." Then, once those conditions were established, the United States refused to give its influence and support to the Versailles Treaty and to the League of Nations to fulfill its obligations for world peace. Britain and France permitted Hitler to rearm Germany with impunity. The United States and Britain failed to maintain their pledge to France to guarantee her concessions to Germany at Versailles. The aggressive actions of French demands for reparations and occupation of Germany enlarged the political turmoil which Hitler exploited for power. And the United States, as well as Great Britain, liberally poured billions of dollars of credits into Germany after the war, and with considerable other economic appeasement, contributed much to a rapidly recovered and militantly rearmed Germany. Much of the world was willing to stand by idly

as Adolf Hitler ravaged Europe. So the greedy Gods of War were said to have been pacified by unrealistic sympathy, compassion, and compromise. Then suddenly, it was too late. The terrible doom of war had become unavoidable.

There is little doubt but that World War II could have been reasonably avoided and, as Hitler later admitted, the downfall of the Nazis would have occurred had France, backed up by a resolute Britain, moved to resist Germany's bravado occupation of the Rhineland in 1936. As it was, it provided Adolf Hitler with an emotional political victory which was exploited and enlarged to enable a criminal dictatorship to seize absolute power in Germany. Thus the appeasement of aggression became a major commitment by Britain and France which provided the Nazi dictator with the opportunity, the time, and the resources to begin his conquest of the freedom of Europe. While there had been little that the West could do, in military terms, to prevent the "reunion" of the German-Austrian allies of World War I, surely a greater effort could have been made by Britain and France to use diplomatic leverage to support what appeared to be a genuine effort by the Austrian government to resist an occupation and to maintain its independence.

Lastly, the appeasement of Hitler by Chamberlain and Daladier at Munich prevented any possibility of a successful political, if not military, intervention for the freedom of Czechoslovakia. Although it may be argued that war would have certainly followed had Britain and France taken a stronger stance against Hitler at that time, it would have been a war which the Allies would have won, and it would have eliminated most of the terrible military and political, as well as human, consequences of World War II. The German generals have agreed that their armed forces were not ready to fight and that a war at that time would have been lost to the superior forces of France and Great Britain. But unfortunately for the millions of human beings who suffered and died in the six terrible years of the awesome conflict, Adolf Hitler had been placated in the West, and by means of the betrayal of the ultimate appeasement of Stalin's Nazi pact, the demonic Fuehrer launched his brutal surprise attack on Poland and unleased the apocalypse upon mankind. As Leonard Mosley so aptly has written, while it was Adolf Hitler's war, "the men whose weakness, stupidity, ignorance and maladroitness had done so much to encourage him still held the reins of power

in Britain and France, and it would be a phony war until the German Chancellor made it a real one."

Chapter 3

The Allied Defeat in the West

The May 1940 battle between France, Britain and Germany turned out to be one of the greatest fiascoes in military history. In one quick and powerful assault, Hitler's "Blitzkrieg" struck down the military forces of France, Great Britain, Belgium and the Netherlands and the world was shocked and frightened by the brute force of the Nazi terror. The power and the rapidity by which the German's overcame two of the world's great powers surprised military experts everywhere as they realized that the warmongering Germans had perfected a new and dreadful type of armed aggression for which their victims had been totally unprepared. It seemed that Adolf Hitler had proved that he could impose his fanatical totalitarianism on the rest of the world with impunity.

It has been established that Britain and France jointly bear much of the responsibility for World War II. By enforcing German compliance with the military restrictions of the Versailles treaty, with effective resistance against the early aggressions of Germany, by encouragement and assistance to the resistance against Hitler within Germany, Britain and France could have effectively prevented the rise of the Nazi dictator. Furthermore, if the two strongest military powers in Europe had demonstrated courage and leadership against the appeasement of the Nazi aggressors, they could have either blocked Hitler's rise to power or taken actions which would have deposed him and preserved a democratic and peaceful government in Germany.

After the horrible insanity of World War I in which the Allied forces had suffered the horrendous losses of over 5,000,000 dead, 12,000,000 wounded and 4,000,000 missing, the mere suggestion of anything that might lead to another war for Britain and France was totally unrealistic and repulsive. But the German people had never accepted the terms of the Versailles treaty for they believed it

had wrongly convicted them with the full guilt for World War I and that Germany had been left unarmed and surrounded by its enemies. The military and most Germans were filled with anger and the desire for vengeance, so when rampant inflation ravaged Germany, their horrendous World War I debts were paid off with worthless inflated currency which created credit for covering the cost of another war. Soon the German Army was able to rearm itself from "scratch" without the liability of outmoded weapons and without the policies and tactics of the past which it believed had caused the loss of the previous war.

For France, Versailles had meant that she had won the most glorious and costliest war in her history over the dreaded Germans, but with the new threat of her historic enemy across her border, she was afraid that she had lost the peace. They feared the potential aggressive power of a neighbor which, in spite of defeat, had retained its unity, manpower and industrial capacity which greatly exceeded their own. Furthermore, with the collapse of the Allied coalition after the peace, they believed that France had been left standing alone against a recovering, increasingly aggressive and threatening Nazi Germany. Their attempt at Versailles to obtain a permanent barrier of defense at the Rhine had failed and the responsibility for peace and security had been assigned to a League of Nations which had no powers of enforcement. While the French still maintained one of the world's largest armies which had seven divisions in the demilitarized zone of the German Rhineland, and an air force with 800 aircraft, they had been unable to convince their former allies to enforce the provisions of the peace treaty. Most tragically, the "paralysis of the glorious victory of the past" had produced a defensive mentality of uncertainty and doubt among the French which resulted in the total inability of their military to successfully oppose the aggressive threat of Hitler's new aerial and mechanized forces.

It is apparent that the United States and Great Britain also shared the responsibility for what would become the catastrophic defeat of the West by Nazi Germany. If the United States had accepted the Versailles treaty, it would have been involved in the moral, economic and military enforcement of its provisions and Britain and France would not have been largely preoccupied with their own affairs. Furthermore, it is always easier to do nothing than to become involved in controversial or costly actions. Most countries, other than France, had decided it was best to bring Germany back as a responsible member of the international

community and efforts continued towards reconciliation. They also believed that the treaty had removed Germany as a military threat and increasingly little thought was given to the possibility of renewed aggression. Britain was said to have "attached more importance to the restoration of peace than to a display of moral rectitude," and they believed that the major purpose of the League of Nations was conciliation rather than security. Thus most of Germany's former enemies, believing they had unjustly charged her with guilt for the war, entered what William Manchester called "that fateful period of overcompensation which eventually led to Munich." With the "massive infusion" of loans from the United States, as well as from the German government, the Krupp furnaces in Essen were turning out thousands of guns and tanks, the Luftwaffe was building the world's strongest and most modern airforce, advanced submarines and large ships were under construction, and Germany would soon possess the most modern and powerful military forces in the world.

In the meantime, Hitler had secretly ordered the Wehrmacht to be enlarged to 300,000 men and his defense budget was increased from 172 to 654 million marks. By March 1935, using the excuse that France was rapidly increasing its military forces, Hitler leaked to the British press that his Luftwaffe air force was already in existence with little reaction from either the British or the French. But the critical factor for the new German armed forces was the development of a new and revolutionary armored offensive capability—the Panzerkorps. German Captain Heinz Guderian had studied and adapted the theories of British Captain Basil Liddel Hart to use massed armored attacks followed by strong mobile infantry to effectively force a break-through in an enemy defensive position. Then, as tactical air strikes prevent enemy reserves from plugging the penetration, fully mechanized armored divisions rush forward at great speed to surround and annihilate the surprised and disorganized enemy before counteroffensive action can be taken. Germany had already completed the formation of her first three Panzer divisions and Guderian had announced, "I shall maneuvre France right out of the Maginot Line without losing a single soldier." Thus the legendary "Blitzkrieg" (lightening war) tactics were born which would revolutionize warfare. Also new standards for winning offensive operations were established that would give Germany the largest and quickest military victories the world had ever known as she began her successful conquest of most of the European continent.

The German training of manpower for war was also revolutionary. The regimentation of German youth began early as members of the "Jungvolk" at age ten pledged their lives to their Fuehrer, at age twelve they received special training in "elite cadres," at fourteen they could join the Hitler Youth which was associated with the Wehrmacht, and at eighteen they were subjected to conscription for military service. By comparison, although there was conscription in France, the public was demoralized over the prospect of another war with Germany and anti-militarism was rampant. The mere thought of war was considered to be so horrible and unacceptable that it could only generate the avoidance of reality. That confusing distress was soon battered by political scandals such as only the French were capable. As so often in their past, they appeared to be determined to intentionally destroy themselves as every element of national cooperation and unity was torn with passion and dissension.

As far back as the "Great Revolution of 1871," France had been divided by two passionate idealogues, one patriotic and the other largely Communist, with the moderates and the conservatives against the workers and the liberals. Between the two great wars political parties continued to battle each other furiously, strikes paralyzed the country, and government after government fell from power. Both the left and the right believed they were fighting for France and violence flowed in the streets of Paris. It soon became a struggle between the "fascists" and the "anti-fascists" and, unfortunately, France was gravely divided and weakened when destruction threatened. As William L. Shirer put it, "It was more important to stop the Front Populaire in the polling booth than to stop Hitler at the Rhine." In fact, it was a civil war that would only end with the occupation of France by the hated Germans!

While France was being torn apart by political and financial chaos, the status, leadership and strategy of her military establishment was in great disarray. After their valiant stand at Verdun, the French believed that their heroic defensive tactics had won the First World War against the Germans, so there was little need for change. In 1940 their army was still equipped with leftovers from the 1918 war. And, due to financial consequences of governmental turmoil, they committed their worst initial blunder when they began to produce new weapons only after war appeared to be imminent. Not only her arms were completely out-of-date, their tactical theories were obsolete. They considered tanks to be mainly

useful for breaking through defensive positions so that the infantry could advance. But an even greater tragedy for the French people occurred when the military became convinced that, after the terrible slaughters of World War I, more great losses from offensive actions were completely unacceptable. So it was their Verdun mentality that had led them to a "Maginot Line" impenetrable defense fixation. Beginning in 1930, 7,000 million francs had been spent building a fortified line extending from the Swiss to the Belgian borders. Labeled as "fortified regions," they extended eighty-seven miles and covered the historic invasion paths into France. With extensive underground forts backing up casemates at three to five mile intervals, supplemented by infantry to offset its immobility, they were the most formidable fortifications ever constructed and were believed to be invincible.

The Maginot Line, however, proved to be a fundamental blunder for French security since it created a totally false sense of protection. First, it was too long and too easily penetrated to possibly be secure. Second, it was totally immobile at a time when warfare would become predominantly mechanized, and it pinned down an excessive number of troops. But the most significant blunder was that the fortifications had been stopped at the border with Belgium when it should have been apparent that all the Germans had to do was to repeat their World War I tactic of invasion through Belgium. The reason, however, had not been so simple. First, the cost of extending the forts through the heaviest industrial area of France would have been astronomical. Second, and more importantly, Belgium as a close ally would have been isolated, her cooperation with France would have been limited, and she would have had no choice but to remain neutral. The Maginot mentality also contributed to the absence of a mutual assistance pact with Russia in that France's predominantly defensive policy would have been of no help to the Soviets. Lastly, it deterred the French from aggressively advancing into the Rhineland which would have pre-empted Hitler's re-occupation, would have denied him his greatest triumph of revenge for the German people, and likely, would have led to the overthrow of his Nazi regime. Actually, by the French forces believing it unwise to leave the security of the Maginot Line, in effect, they were protecting Germany from invasion as well as France. Wars can rarely be won by defensive measures alone, and by her totally defensive attitude, France had lost the battle before it had begun.

One of Britain's major interests concerned the danger that increasing problems between France and Germany would prevent the restoration of better international conditions for business and trade. They wanted France to reduce their armed forces and to recognize Germany's right to limited rearmament which would increase the opportunity for a more prosperous and peaceful future on the continent. Furthermore, the British consistently avoided policies which might cause Germany to remain in a state of "permanent subjection." France, however, refused to disarm, pointing out that she had no hidden reserves like the para-military and pre-military organizations in Germany. With an attempt to set an example, Britain made the crucial blunder of cutting her armed forces so drastically under the Locarno Pact that only a token force would be available to aid either France or Germany in the event one was attacked by the other. Later proposals to strengthen Britain's armed forces were defeated when the politicians made the mistake of avoiding positions which might appear to be involving the country in another disastrous war. Clearly, it was Britain's refusal to rearm, as well as her continuing efforts to pacify the Nazi Fuehrer, that convinced Adolf Hitler that the British would not fight and that he could get whatever he wanted without the use of military force.

After Hitler's invasion into the Rhineland in 1936, when France had backed down, it was obvious to Belgium that the French would not risk war to oppose Germany's aggressions. Also, recognizing that a demilitarized Rhineland no longer protected her and that German soldiers now stood on her border, the Belgians stood alone and vulnerable. Believing that only neutrality could save her from occupation by the Germans, she revoked her mutual assistance treaty with France which was a disastrous decision for both Belgium and France. The French suddenly found themselves exposed to a German attack across their undefended northern border with Belgium. Equally disastrous, French and British forces could enter Belgium only if she had been attacked and, by then, it would be too late. Since an alliance with the Soviet Union had been eliminated by Poland's and Rumania's refusal to permit Soviet troops to pass across their borders, knowing the Soviets would never leave, the French desperately needed other alliances to help contain Germany. But when they had backed down against Hitler, their bargaining power had been largely lost. That left the only recourse for France, aside from her mutual-assistance pact with Poland and the hope of Britain's limited

assistance, was to extend the Maginot Line for which there were no funds and too little time. Unfortunately, the French politicians had resorted to their "time-honored expedient" of deceiving the French people, their allies, and themselves by pretending an impossible situation was being resolved.

By having placed Germany on a total "war economy," Adolf Hitler transformed a nation in bankruptcy from inflation to the strongest military power in the world over a period of four short years. As early as March 1935, Hitler had announced his defiance of the Versailles "diktat" by stating that Germany would rearm and ordered military conscription which he claimed was justified by the "expansion" of the French Army. France and Britain, after statements of protest, did nothing. By 1939 there were fifty-one German divisions which would double upon mobilization. But the most important work had been undertaken right after Versailles. Of the 100,000-man army allowed Germany, 20,000 had been trained as officers and 40,000 as non-commissioned officers. To by-pass international restrictions, they held maneuvers with dummy tanks and built special wheeled armored carriers and motorcycles for use in the new tactics of "lightning" warfare. Consequently, the French were still mired in the concept of static warfare of the past while the Germans had developed the new "blitzkrieg" of concentrated armored mobility which would dominate the future of warfare. In other words, a German victory could be expected since the French had practically removed themselves as an effective adversary.

The build-up of the Luftwaffe was another important advancement which, together with revolutionary new armored concepts, enabled the Nazi forces to employ new weapons to gain their spectacular victories at the beginning of the war. The Germans also pioneered in the integration of the tactical use of aircraft with the fast mobility of armor to demoralize and to destroy the enemy. Their tactical innovations obtained an early start by having their pilots trained in Austria and Russia and by building planes in other countries or undercover in Germany. So, by 1933 Germany had planes that were faster than those of the French and, by concentrating on limited types of planes, they were able to greatly increase their plane production. When the war began in 1939, Germany had 3,609 planes to 1,112 for the French and 1,660 for the British. The French air force, like the army, had deteriorated and its aircraft were obsolete and of little value. Although the quality of the British planes were competitive with the

Luftwaffe, the German advantage was that their airpower would be largely employed to support the offensive ground operations while Allied planes were used mainly for defense against other planes.

The major enemy of France, however, would become the violent disunity which infested the French people. As Fascist-anti-Fascist passions became more widespread, the Germans manipulated anti-Semitism, Socialist hatred, and the French inclination towards pacifism to incite greater divisions among the people. Influential Frenchmen were invited to Germany, and much German propaganda was distributed in France in an attempt to exploit the passionately divided country as well as to advance the cause of "peace" between Germany and France. While much was made of "fifth columns" intent upon undermining French morale, it proved to be far less damaging than the political turmoil which caused such great dissension and division among all segments of French society.

Having successfully rearmed Germany without war, the Nazi Chancellor was determined to make Germany the most powerful armed force in Europe. With his devious use of claims for peace and reconciliation, he had managed to shield his rearmament from all but mild protests from Britain and France. Then, after it became obvious that the League of Nation powers would do nothing to enforce their sanctions against Mussolini's invasion of defenseless Abyssinia, he concluded he could get away with his aggressions against his neighbors—and he was right. During only one year in power he had successfully overthrown the democratic German government; destroyed all political parties, labor unions and democratic institutions; gained control of the press, churches and courts; took over the military; and every aspect of life in Germany was subjected to the absolute control of his Nazi dictatorship. All of which had been easily and quickly accomplished even after he had publicly announced in advance most of his evil intentions against both neighbors and mankind-in-general in his book *Mein Kampf*. But he also knew that most nations will go to almost any length, even in the face of an invasion, to avoid the horrors of war thus increasing the likelihood of the awful fate they most wish to avoid.

Three years before the war began the German nation was already operating on full-scaled preparations for war. "We are already at war," Herman Goering told Germany's leading industrialists, "All that is lacking is the actual shooting." The Ruhr factories were turning out masses of new armaments, vast numbers of

troops were being specially trained in "blitzkrig" tactics, the Luftwaffe was being trained in the Spanish War, the German economy was operating on a war-time basis, and "ersatz" gasoline and rubber, as well as the new plastics, had been developed for special military uses. In a meeting with his top military commanders in 1937, Hitler justified making war by claiming that Germany had a right greater than that of other people "to preserve the racial community and to enlarge it." It was a question, he said, of "lebensraum"—living space. Obviously, such space would have to come from those countries on the borders of Germany itself and he called for the annexation of Austria and Czechoslovakia. He did not believe that Britain would be foolish enough to get involved in another European war nor that France would attack Germany without Britain as an ally. So his mind was made up—Germany was prepared to go to war with Britain and France, if necessary, for the reunification of the German people.

By March 19, 1938, having failed to gain control by subversive means, Hitler ordered the German Army to invade and occupy Austria. But before the Wehrmacht could move, the Austrian Nazis took over the streets of Vienna, and when Hitler demanded a choice of either a Nazi Chancellor or invasion, Austria capitulated and Hitler marched in to a "tumultuous welcome" by the Austrian people. Since the West had done nothing to resist his initiatives, as he expected, Hitler next used the freedom of three and a half million "Sudeten" Germans as a pretext for an attack on the Czechs. Britain and France, however, were so anxious to avoid war, and to gain "peace in our time," that they not only failed to help Czechoslovakia, but approved agreements with Hitler at Munich which forced the Czechs to cede the Sudetenland to Germany. Then, after Britain and France had betrayed their ally, on October 1, 1938 the German army marched across the borders and occupied defenseless Czechoslovakia. And then shamefully, as Poland and Hungary grabbed parts of Czechoslovakia for themselves, and since Britain and France had abandoned their guarantee to preserve its independence at Munich, Czechoslovakia ceased to exist. Once again the German Fuehrer had seized another great conquest for the German people without the loss of a single German soldier.

But aggressive success only increases the appetite and the confidence of the aggressor. Next, the victorious Nazi leader turned towards his Polish neighbor, stating his intention to avenge the insult of Versailles which had created the

Danzig Corridor to separate East Prussia from Germany. Although Poland resisted his increasing demands, France remained divided and passive. Britain, however, was forced to realize that a strong stand against Hitler had to be taken, at last, and suddenly made a unilateral pledge to assist Poland in the event of an attack. Although better late than never, and as unprepared as she was, Britain had committed herself to another war and had, in effect, given another country control of her fate even when none of her direct vital interests were involved. While there was little she could give the Poles other than moral support, at least there was hope that it might help deter the aggressor. Undoubtedly, it was also hoped that Hitler would yield rather than face the dreaded two-front war which had added much to Germany's undoing in World War I. Yet many observers claim that such a commitment in reality offered no assistance to Poland yet committed Britain to another war to which the people of Great Britain had been unalterably opposed, and they believed it was one of Britain's greatest blunders of all time. Obviously, Hitler was convinced that Britain and France would not go to war over Poland, and that even if they did, there would be little they could do to help the Poles. Furthermore, he undoubtedly believed that little Poland would also quickly knuckle under before the might of the Wehrmacht and Luftwaffe. So secretly on April 3, 1938, the Fuehrer ordered his military commanders "to destroy the Polish armed forces. To this end a surprise attack is to be aimed at and prepared." First, however, he realized it would be necessary to bribe the Soviets to keep them out of the conflict until he was ready to deal with them later. Consequently, the world's most hated "dictatorial despots" bought each other off in a two-way "contract with the Devil," the Nazi-Soviet Pact, which opened the door for the greatest depths of human depravity and bestiality in history.

The world was shocked when the two dictators signed their "pact of evil" on August 23, 1939 just in time for the Fuehrer to meet his kick-off date of September 1 for the occupation and division of Poland by the Nazi and Communist dictators. Not only was Poland doomed but Hitler believed it would enable him to avoid the dreaded two-front war with the Soviets and the West. Furthermore, he thought that if war should come in the West, it would enable him to defeat Britain and France after which he would eliminate the Soviet Union. The Fuehrer also believed the Nazi-Soviet Pact to be his most brilliant diplomatic coup d'etat for it would enable him to conquer Poland then give him

time to build-up his armed forces to destroy the Russian Bolsheviks, capture their vast food and oil resources, and to acquire the living space Germany needed in the east. Many historians, however, hold that it proved to be his greatest blunder which, more than any other development during the war, turned Germany away from a quick and relatively easy conquest of both Poland and the Soviet Union, as well as the eventual conquest of all of Europe. Instead, he had foolishly given the Communist dictator the time to prepare the Soviet Union for a resistance which eventually brought a disastrous defeat to Germany and the destruction of Nazism.

It soon became obvious, in spite of frantic worldwide efforts to avoid war, that the Poles would not back down and that the Nazis would continue to force their demands. The armies of the major powers in Europe were mobilized but no one wanted war, not even the people of Germany. In London, in Paris and in Berlin the prospect of another horrible conflict was generally viewed with anxiety and fear, but the predominant question continued to be "what will Britain and France do to meet their pledge of assistance if Poland is attacked by Germany?"

The difficulties then facing Britain and France appeared to be insoluble. They knew they were no match against the power of a rearmed Germany, yet they had no choice but to face up to the Nazi threat to the freedom of all of Europe. They felt they had done everything possible to try to avoid another war, but now regretfully, they had been forced to acknowledge that only the force of arms could stop Adolf Hitler's aggressions. They also knew that the likelihood of an effective coalition against Germany appeared impossible under the probability of a massive German onslought against Poland while Stalin's Soviet forces stood ready to grab its share of the spoils. Moreover, only twenty years after the terrible suffering and horrible devastation of one war, from which both Britain and France were still grievously recovering, they would be forced to go through the pain and sacrifice of yet another disastrous conflict. Nonetheless, it was apparent that the consequences of doing nothing would be even harder to bear. At least, war would place them once again on the side of justice and, if worse came to worse, even death would be preferable to slavery in a Nazi prison camp. Also, even though everything seemed hopeless, they believed that God was on their side, and that perhaps eventually America, who shared most of their values, would come to their aid again as in World War I.

By the summer of 1939, Britain's production of military equipment had made substantial progress and France had, at last, begun to step-up her production for the military with new spirit and confidence. In spite of Britain's and France's distrust of the Soviets, by June talks had begun with Stalin for mutual assistance against German aggression including a guarantee for maintaining Poland's independence. However, when Britain indicated that it could send only five infantry and one motorized divisions to join the French against a German attack, the Soviets were shocked. Since Russian plans for security included the mobilization of 120 infantry and 16 cavalry divisions with 10,000 vehicles, obviously the defensive commitment in the West was considered to be no basis for negotiation. Moreover, when the Poles refused to permit Soviet troops to enter Poland in the event of a German attack, the Soviets determined there was little basis for a mutual assistance agreement. It would be foolish, Stalin concluded, to go to war when there would be no help from the West. By that time, knowing it was essential to avoid war with Russia when he attacked Poland, Hitler made his first move to avoid any conflict with the Soviets. After desperate negotiations, in which Stalin blackmailed Hitler into paying the maximum cost for his cooperation, the two future adversaries agreed to temporarily divide Poland between them.

Hitler was furious that the British and the French were willing to risk war by interfering with his intentions to regain German rights in Poland. Both he and his generals were very concerned that the French and the British would attack his rear while he was busy with Poland. And on August 25, when Mussolini refused to join the fight with the Poles, he postponed the attack and made a last effort to avoid a war in the West. But the British, at last, refused to backdown on Poland even though the French were divided and attempted to avoid war "at any cost." Many of the French believed, in fact, that Britain was leading them into another war and the Communists, one of the largest parties in France, as soon as the Nazi-Soviet pact was signed and obviously at Moscow's order, suddenly switched from demands that France fight against Hitler to a propaganda campaign hailing Stalin as "the savior of peace."

While the war clouds heavily gathered over Europe the French remained hopelessly divided. The far right hated the Republic more than they hated Hitler. The Communists, supporting Stalin's peace agreement with Hitler, resorted to sabotage and defeatism to keep France out of the war. Even the public disputes of

the mistresses of France's two most important leaders, Premier Edouard Daladier and Finance Minister Paul Reynaud, involved the nation in divisive power intrigues as yet another sign of France's head-long flight into self-destruction. Once the attack on Poland started, Mussolini, not being prepared to participate, tried to get Germany, Britain and France to confer and the Poles desperately demanded that France fulfill her obligation to come to her aid. The British thought the French were stalling and became impatient but, having no troops on the continent, they were limited to early naval operations only, whereas the French had to face up to the reality of another conflict of mutual slaughter with the Germans.

The original German plan for war with the West, based on the World War I "Schleiffen Plan," had been much more modest than the sweeping results of the actual campaign would turn out to be. No one even considered the possibility of such a spectacular success. In fact, Hitler not only did not plan on the defeat of the French Army, he merely intended for his offensive to push back the French so that he could occupy the coast opposite Britain to separate the Allies and to obtain air and naval sites from which to "harass and blockade" England. He believed that once he could defeat Britain and France, then peace in the West would follow and he would be able to handle Russia without distraction or interference.

It is said that Germany won her initial successes in the wars of 1870, the First World War and in World War II all in the same way—by unexpected attacks through the Ardennes. In 1870, five hundred new and deadly Krupp cannon at Sedan had hammered Napoleon III into surrender, and in 1914, a great wheeling action had sought to "brush the channel with its sleeve" and to pass beneath Paris from its anchor at Sedan. Yet incredulously in 1940, French plans failed to anticipate the possibility that once again history might repeat itself with Sedan becoming the operational turning point in one of the world's greatest military fiascoes.

Unfortunately, Allied strategy had been dictated by the Maginot Line which caused the on-coming conflict to be dominated by a defensive attitude. It tragically eliminated any serious consideration of offensive strategy which could have completely changed the nature of the conflict. Correctly, the Allies believed its reputed invincibility would cause the enemy to strike again through Belgium.

But in the mistaken belief that as non-combatants they could escape the consequences of occupation by the aggressor, both Belgium and Holland insisted on maintaining strict neutrality which prevented any mutual defensive preparations, other than secret consultations, with France and Britain. In fact, they were so careful not to offend the Germans that French officers were even prevented from visiting Belgian fortifications in civilian clothes. As a result, massed Allied forces only partially motorized would be forced to rush forward across the Belgian border to take up a defensive line from Antwerp to Mezieres only after an attack by Germany. It was a fatally flawed plan which prevented any possibility of mounting an effective Allied defense under such unpromising circumstance.

In spite of its deficiencies, the French army was considered to be "the most perfectly trained and faithful mobile force in Europe," according to Winston Churchill, and it was generally expected to be more than a match for the Germans. France could mobilize 110 divisions of which sixty-five would be active, with five of cavalry and two mechanized, but with only one armored division being formed. Eighty-five divisions could be placed opposite the Germans and 5,000,000 men could be mobilized. Meanwhile, as an ally of Britain and France, Poland could place forty-eight divisions in the field which would have provided substantial resistance to a traditional military attack by Germany. Together France and Poland could commit 130 divisions to oppose ninety-eight German divisions of which thirty-six were untrained and unorganized. Numerically, France alone should have had the best of Germany, but the French committed an incredible blunder with their total failure to understand the revolutionary changes in the tactics of modern armored mobility. Instead, the French stupidly chose to fight the war of 1940 with the same mind-set as in 1914. There was simply no way that France could defend itself and that Nazism would fail to win its most spectacular victory!

Equally incredible, the British had committed to place a totally inadequate force of only five divisions in France, and a Territorial field army of twenty-six divisions was being called up which, in the event of war, would increase to fifty-five divisions. In the air Britain had about 600 bombers and France had only about half that number. But there would be little that Britain could do initially, aside from using her maritime forces for blockade, since her first units could not be sent to France before 1940. In the meantime, Germany had mobilized but most of her

units were comprised of new recruits and older World War I veterans not fully trained nor armed. They were definitely not prepared for either offense or defense in the West since Adolf Hitler had initially told his officers that he would not be ready to make war against France and Britain before 1944. Surprisingly, in 1939 the Germans had only a few light and vulnerable tanks. However, numbers still ruled the field of battle and practically no one considered that Germany would have a chance against the combined forces of Britain and France.

But the Allied strategy was doomed from the beginning. Historically European military defenses had been maintained largely through alliances and spheres-of-influence, but just prior to World War II, France and Britain found that they could not depend on traditional coalition arrangements to provide military forces strong enough for victory, nor could they realistically expect that the threat of a two-front war would stop Hitler's aggression. Agreements with Russia under Communist control could not be relied upon and, furthermore, there was little interest in cooperating with a Bolshevik state, and the small states of Central Europe could offer little assistance to the West or to each other. Then it became evident that if France had only shown the courage and the determination to have forced Hitler out of the Rhineland, it would likely have been the end of Adolf Hitler, and then other countries would have joined with France for their mutual security. But, finding that none of the countries that surrounded Poland were interested in being allied with her, France found herself as Poland's only continental ally since their shared national interests demanded opposition to any further aggression by the Nazis. Now, France, Britain and Poland no longer had any choice but to resort to military resistance to stop the Nazi control of all of Europe.

Soon the full fury of the Nazis' military might struck Poland on September 1, 1939 as armored columns raced across the country following vicious attacks by the Luftwaffe. On that day, the author and two young companions were driving back to Virginia after visiting the New York World's Fair. At Baltimore newsboys were selling "extras" reporting the German attack on Poland, and the author told his friends, "that means war and we will be in it." And soon thereafter all three of us went off to war. Two days later Britain, honoring her commitment to Poland and realizing she finally had to take a stand against Nazi aggression, declared war on Germany. France, without any British troops on the continent and realizing that the Germans would probably strike her first, hesitated but also declared war

six hours later. Both countries had unrealistic expectations for the army of Poland, as well as for their own armies. Poland, while no match for Germany, was expected to put up a strong defense and it was believed that France would unleash the powerful kind of defense expected of the world's largest standing army. Pathetically, the French still thinking in terms of the previous war, believed the conflict would be a long and costly one, and no one had any idea about how effective the German's new "blitzkrieg" tactics had become. And even though poor Poland was defeated in five short weeks, both Britain and France blunderingly failed to understand, and to prepare for, a new warfare which had made their equipment and their tactics ineffective and obsolete. They had no idea how vulnerable and defenseless they had become before a ruthless and mighty opponent.

The French treaty with Poland required France to mount an offensive in the West if Germany attacked Poland and by September 7 French troops advanced into the Saar region of Germany with newspapers announcing it as a big attack with "secret" 70-ton tanks crashing through the German line. The fact was that the French alone had 85 divisions opposing Germany's 34 divisions which stretched from Switzerland to the Low Countries. There were only 11 German divisions that were fully equipped and trained, they had no tanks and they had only a three day supply of ammunition. But the French advanced only five miles in five days on a 16-mile front practically unopposed as the German outposts withdrew behind the Siegfried Line. At the same time for fear of reprisals, the French restrained the British RAF from bombing Germany, so only leaflets were dropped on Germany. Incredulously, that was the maximum extent of the support the French and British provided their Polish ally while it was being annihilated by the Nazis. Not a single German unit had been drawn away from the assault on Poland and, when the French saw the power of the "blitzkrieg," and the disintegration of the Polish resistance, they ordered their offensive in the Saar to stop. Then, as the unassisted and defeated Poles surrendered, the French withdrew their forces back to their Maginot Line. The actions of the French constituted one of the most cowardly acts ever committed by a so-called military ally.

The massive invasion and the quick defeat of Poland had an ominous and paralyzing effect on the Western Allies. The mere idea of another European war was so frightening and unacceptable that it seemed that Germany, as well as her Western opponents, was still reluctant to take the last step which would begin

another terrible war which would surely once again consume all of Europe. It was as if they believed that if they took no aggressive military action that peace would remain, and the more time they could gain, the better prepared their armed forces would be. So while both sides mobilized and rushed their forces to face each other in the West, neither side took action against the other. Incredibly, the absence of military action on the Western Front lasted for ten months and became known as the "Phony War" while the Germans called it the "Sitzkrieg." But while the West desperately hoped that peace would somehow miraculously avoid another terrible conflagration, the German Fuehrer was scheming for further conquests. And, with his easy and costless success in the joint rape of Poland, the Soviet dictator quickly occupied his agreed upon part of Poland and began to assert his newly acquired influence over the Baltic states, Finland and the Balkans.

The Germans had observed the timidity of the "powerful" French army with great relief because they had not been prepared to take on Britain and France in addition to Poland. In fact, German military leaders had feared a successful offensive by France while they were preoccupied with the Poles. However, the French had committed a disastrous blunder which was a tragedy for the entire world. Had they aggressively attacked Germany with their vastly superior forces while the German Army was committed in Poland and when the West Wall was so lightly held, they could have occupied the industrial Ruhr that would have cut Hitler off from his source for tanks and heavy weapons. Although their attack would not have saved Poland, it certainly would have involved the Wehrmacht in heavy fighting in the midst of Germany with the likelihood of a drawn-out battle. In any case, it would have probably avoided the awesome circumstances of the "quick victory" in the West. Surely the invasion of the Soviet Union would have been delayed, if not prevented, and with Hitler fully committed in the West Stalin would have been tempted to attack the German rear so as to grab more of the independent states of Central Europe. Unquestionably, it would have completely changed the nature of the outcome of a Western campaign and the changes in the consequences on World War II would have been extensive. But Adolf Hitler, going for all or nothing, won what appeared to be more miraculous victories for Germany. His neutralization of Russia, the "blitzkrieg" victory in

Poland, and the ineffectiveness of the French and British, led Hitler and the German people to believe that their Fuehrer was "prophetic, if not invincible."

In a sense, the defeat of the Poles was a relief for the French for there would be no more pressure to attack the Germans in the West. Only fifteen of their divisions took part in the so-called Saar offensive which was little more than a "demonstration." Then cowardly, they committed another massive blunder by doing nothing throughout the ten months of the "Phony War" giving the Germans time to transfer their forces from the East, to secure the flank by occupying Denmark and Norway, and to prepare their "blitzkrieg" assault upon France and the Low Countries with practically full immunity. After their one "offensive" action had ended in a retreat, the French army as well as the French public, were fatally infected with defeatism. It was widely believed that since Poland had lost its war with Germany, there was no need for France to remain in the war. Meanwhile, both Hitler and Stalin, whose pact had brought on the war, accused Britain and France for continuing the war. In fact Moscow and Berlin issued a joint declaration calling on Britain and France to make peace and said it would be their fault if the war did not end. Secretly, Hitler prepared for an attack and directed his commanders to strike and destroy the French and British "as soon as possible."

Stupidly, the French learned nothing from the Nazi attack on Poland. No significant changes nor modifications were made in the plan of defense even though their observers in Poland had reported how the Germans had quickly exploited breakthroughs by using massed armor and air attacks against "inadequately manned" defenses. They were also warned that the German objectives had not been the capture of any particular geographic points, but rather to destroy the enemy's forces. Other observations included the use of aircraft to paralyze the enemy's response to attack and that it was essential for all fortifications to be manned with anti-tank guns. Publicly claiming no ill feelings for France nor Britain and that all he wanted was peaceful relations with them, Hitler sought only to gain time to complete his preparations for the attack on the West.

A young French Colonel, however, understood what happened in Poland and urged that tanks should be concentrated in armored forces rather than wasted in support of infantry units. But Charles DeGaulle's warning was ignored. Furthermore, France's two top military commanders Generals Maurice Gamelin

and Alphonse Georges detested each other, could not agree on what actions Allied forces should take, and were heavily involved in French politics. According to Shirer, "As France drifted towards the supreme crisis" not thinking it would ever occur, "the High Command, like the government—and the people—remained divided." At the front, more than two million Frenchmen had become infected with "the malaise that would destroy La Belle France." Many believed that after the defection of Russia as an ally, with Britain's limited help there was no way that France could win a war with powerful Germany. Then after the Soviet-Nazi Pact, French Communists had declared "all-out resistance to the continuation of the war," and Britain was suddenly made the major enemy of the French people. Increasing strikes, subversion, sabotage, and political disruption, literally had destroyed French morale and torn the country apart. It was popularly felt that the French people had "literally sacrificed the 'glorie' of France to defeat."

Hitler knew that the sooner he struck the West the less prepared they would be and set the first date for November 12, 1939 for the "surprise" attack to be launched against Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg. The German generals intervened, however, claiming that it would lead to a disaster since the equipment from Poland needed to be refitted, the Army was not ready, and the weather would restrict the Luftwaffe. As it turned out, with weather as the main reason, there would be fourteen postponements before the actual attack. Then too, the Nazis were shocked when their Soviet Union "ally" suddenly attacked peaceful Finland. The resistance put up by the gallant Finns against the powerful Soviets, who had joined the Nazis in swallowing up the small states of East Europe, was greatly admired throughout most of the world. But when Adolf Hitler learned that Britain and France were planning to send troops through Norway to help Finland, the occupation of Denmark and Norway was ordered. Before the Allies could find any other action to help Finland, the Russo-Finnish War ended while the Nazis had not only outflanked the West by taking over Norway, but had gained an area from which the Luftwaffe and the Kriegsmarine could more easily attack Great Britain.

Then a bizarre event occurred which further delayed German plans for the attack in the West. Two German officers got lost while on a flight from Munich to Cologne and their courier plane was forced down just across the Belgian border. They were carrying specific plans for the attack against the West scheduled

for January 17 and their documents were seized by the local Belgian police. King Leopold still refused to mobilize and continued to oppose Allied entry into Belgium that prevented the preparation of joint defenses which might have delayed, if not saved, the West from disaster. The French, however, did take the extra precautionary measure of placing their main "striking force" on the Belgian border so that it could move forward with the least delay.

The Belgian refusal to permit the undertaking of joint Allied defensive measures was a critical blunder and it made defeat certain for Belgium, as well as for all Allied forces. The French repeatedly attempted to convince the Belgians of the necessity for secret defensive measures for the joint security of the West, but Leopold feared consequences with Germany and insisted on the strict maintenance of Belgium's neutrality. If he had permitted the French forces to join up with Belgian forces in a prepared line of defense, the nature of the Battle of France would have been altered, and while a defeat would not likely have been avoided, the outcome would have been delayed and the sudden collapse and evacuation at Dunkirk might not have occurred. In any event, the Battle of Britain would have been delayed, the attack on Russia would have probably taken place at a later date when the weather would have been more adverse, and other consequences would have had a profound effect upon the war.

Nonetheless, the French were confident that the Germans would cross "the historic route" through Belgium as in World War I by attacking through the Liege area to gain access to the Belgian plains so favorable for tank movements. The contingency plan that had been originally worked out with the Belgians called for the French forces to move quickly forward to occupy a Belgian prepared defensive line from Arlon to Liege in support of Belgian forces on the Albert Canal. But in 1936 King Leopold made the grievous mistake of accepting the German promise not to invade Belgian and informed the French that if they entered Belgium prior to an attack by the Germans, they would be opposed by the Belgian Army. Holland also insisted on similar conditions since they too feared any act that might give the Germans any excuse for invasion. It became, therefore, one of the great tragedies of history that cooperative defensive measures could not be taken by the Allies before the attack by Germany which could have greatly affected the outcome of World War II. Since the consequences of World War I under similar circumstances were well known, Leopold's actions

were more than ignorance or stupidity. It was sheer cowardice and after the war Leopold was forced to abdicate on charges of treason and collaboration.

Oddly enough, there was no agreement between the French and the British about how to best meet the German invasion threat in Belgium. The French did not agree with the British that once the Germans attacked, it would be too late to rush into Belgium to set-up an effective resistance. After negotiation, the British Expeditionary Forces agreed to move up when permitted to the Scheldt in Holland which would extend a "continuous front" with the Belgians and the Dutch. In the meantime, however, the Dutch became worried and, instead of agreeing to hold part of the Allied line, decided to use their small forces to protect Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague. That meant the French would need to assign their most modernized and mostly motorized Seventh Army to cover the greatest distance on the British left to move up to the Dutch Walcheren Island area. It also created one of the most critical military blunders possible, for with eight French armies and one British army on the line, no reserves were left to use against a German breakthrough anywhere on the entire Western Front. And equally disastrous, no substantial forces would be available for an effective counterattack.

Rampant dissent among the French, and between the French and the British over the Allied plan of defense, continued up to the final moment while General Maurice Gamelin maintained a "sublimely confident posture" that his plans were adequate to defeat the enemy. On paper his final dispositions showed a strong right backed-up by the Maginot Line, a strong left across Belgium to the Dutch coast at Walcheren, and a weak center opposite the wooded, mountainous terrain of the Ardennes which was considered to be impassable for masses of tanks and motorized units. That meant only four light cavalry divisions partly on horses and ten "mediocre" infantry divisions of the Second and Ninth Armies were assigned to hold the vital Ardennes sector. Amazingly, in spite of repeated past precedents, warnings on the lack of a reserve, the existence of a weak center, and evidence of the time and place of the attack, the failure of the French to have placed stronger forces at the northern end of the Maginot Line, obviously the most vulnerable position of the entire Allied line of defense, was one of the most inexcusable blunders of the war.

Similarly, the resistance plans of the Dutch were equally unrealistic and ineffective. They planned to fight delaying actions while withdrawing to "Fortress Holland" between the Zeider Zee and the Rhine while the Belgians would make their stand at the Antwerp-Maastricht-Namur line utilizing maximum advantage of their forts and canals. Even with the ninety-four combined divisions of Britain and France rushing forward to the Dyle-Meuse Line, General Georges was pessimistic about the Allied ability to hold out against the German attack. Still Gamelin ignored all criticism and refused to change the overall Allied plan of defense to correct weaknesses which were apparent. It was a no-win situation. While defeat can obviously be avoided by a strong and successful defense, it should have been apparent to the French that victory can rarely, if ever, be won by a strategy of static defense.

Generally conditions could not have been more favorable for another dramatic victory for Adolf Hitler. He had declared his determination to destroy his enemies in the West with "one gigantic knockout blow" and, unlike the World War I struggle, he knew the French were in no condition to fight a war. In fact, he predicted their quick collapse. Many German military leaders disagreed, however, believing the two forces to be evenly matched and doubted that both the French and the British could be defeated. But the "infallible Warlord" asserted that had Germany's World War I attack been properly executed according to plan, their foot "blitzkrieg" would have won the war before America could enter the conflict. So, like World War I, the massive surprise attack was set to strike through the Dutch-Northern Belgium area in November 1939, but was postponed due to bad weather. Then suddenly, after the German plane accident in January had revealed his plans to the enemy, the Fuehrer reversed himself and called for a new strategy.

Meanwhile, General Fritz von Manstein convinced Hitler that concentrated armor attacks proceeded by terrorizing Luftwaffe strafing, bombing, and airborne assaults unexpectedly launched through the Ardennes at Sedan would trap and destroy Allied forces as they rushed forward into Belgium to occupy their planned line of defense. It was a brilliant strategy which would make the most of German strength and tactics to take maximum advantage of Allied vulnerabilities. Equally important, it was uniquely suited to the new offensive tactics that would successfully meet the Fuehrer's demand for a "quick victory" to bring

about an early peace in the West. Lastly, Germany would then be able to turn around and destroy the Bolsheviks before they could seize the advantage of attacking the undefended German rear. Enthusiastically, the Fuehrer knew that Manstein's plan had given him the ideal opportunity to turn loose his new and powerful armored forces to annihilate his enemies.

During the eight months when the Allies were afraid to take any important offensive actions against the Germans for fear of retaliation, they considerably helped the Nazis by giving them time to repair, enlarge and ship their forces from Poland to the Western Front. Code-named "Case Yellow," Manstein's plan would operate like a "revolving door." When the Allies rushed northward from France, the Wehrmacht armor would strike eastward and the Allied armies would be trapped in Belgium and Holland. Then the Maginot Line could be taken from the rear and the almost negligible Allied forces in the remainder of France would be easily overcome. Kuchler's Eighteenth Army was placed to attack Holland; Reichenau's Sixth Army would strike Belgium north of Liege; Kluge's Fourth Army, List's Twelfth Army and Busch's Sixteenth Army were to make the heaviest attack in the center from south of Liege to Luxembourg; and the First and Seventh Armies would hold the line facing the Maginot fortifications from Luxembourg to Switzerland.

With seven panzer divisions concentrated to strike through the Ardennes region, which the French considered to be impenetrable, a "solid steel phalanx" of armor forty-five miles wide would drive for the Meuse from Sedan to Dinant, where they were least expected and where the French had located their weakest forces. Preceded by heavy and terrifying Luftwaffe attacks General Heinz Guderian's XIX Panzer Corps with the 1st, 2nd, and 10th Panzer divisions, in tandem with the 6th and 8th panzers just to the north, backed up by motorized infantry, were to direct their strongest blow through the Sedan area while the 5th and 7th panzers would cross the Meuse at Dinant. At the same time, the Sixth and Eighteenth Armies would strike in Holland and Northern Belgium following Luftwaffe bombings and parachute and glider landings to capture bridges, neutralize forts along rivers and canals, and to disrupt communications. The preparations for the assaults had been so thorough that a complete mock-up of the key Fort Eben Emal was built in Germany to rehearse a split-second operation. The organization was so extensive and thorough, and confidence was so

high, that one German officer predicted that the operation would be completed within "fourteen days." Apart from the devastating blunders of the Allies, it was a battle plan which would become one of the most skillful and spectacularly successful operations ever.

The plan was far from perfect, however, since the British escaped at Dunkirk and continued to fight Germany. The "one fatal flaw," according to Alistair Horne, was the German failure to develop contingency plans of action after the breakthrough at Sedan since there was no projection of a drive to the coast as an objective. If this important failing had not occurred, plans for the assault on Britain would have provided a reasonably expeditious, and likely successful, conquest of Britain shortly after the disaster of Dunkirk. Then, with Great Britain out of the war there would have been no Normandy invasion and the Nazis would have captured all of Europe. Apparently, it never occurred to the Germans that their attack on their powerful traditional enemies would prove to be what James L. Stokesbury called, "one of the world's greatest military masterpieces."

General Gamelin remained absolutely convinced that the Germans would only come down through Liege as in the previous war and, in spite of continued warnings and much evidence to the contrary, he could not be shaken from his "idee fixe." Reports of deficient defensive installations in the Ardennes area were not only refuted by General Charles Huntziger, who commanded the area, but he opposed improvements as not being needed. A week before the attack, Colonel Hans Oster of German Intelligence had actually provided details of the invasion to the Dutch military attache in Berlin. The Pope also advised the Belgians that the attack was coming and a partial mobilization was ordered as other warnings were received from the "Schwarze Kapelle" underground in Germany, as well as from the Allied code-breaking machine ULTRA. But France rigidly retained her stubborn mind-set and the situation in France could hardly have been worse. The Premier was sick, his mistress was running the government, Generals Gamelin and Georges were fighting over who would direct the battle, the country was torn apart by political dissension, both the far right and the Communists were trying to force France out of the war, the Commander-in-Chief and the Minister of Defense were fighting with the Head of State who was trying to replace them, military morale was rapidly disintegrating, and the mili-

tary, as well as the nation, remained almost totally unprepared to cope with the threatening disaster.

The strength of forces of the opponents on the eve of battle greatly favored the Allies. They had 136 divisions on the continent of which 94 were French, 22 Belgian, 10 British and 9 Dutch with a total of 4,000,000 men. The Germans final strength gave them 136 divisions with a total of only about 2,000,000 men. Surprisingly, the Allies also had more tanks with heavier armor than the Germans and vastly outnumbered their opponents in artillery. The only German superiority was in aircraft. The battle, however, like any battle would not be determined by numbers but by the training and morale of the men, the quality of weapons, the competence of leadership, the tactics and strategies employed together with the ever-constant unknown factors of chance and error. In that sense, the comparison greatly favored the Germans.

Most of Germany's 2,400 tanks were light tanks with undersized guns since there were only 349 medium tanks with 37 mm guns and 278 of the new 24-ton tanks with 75 mm guns. The Allies not only had 3,000 tanks but the French had the best tank in the battle—a 33-ton "B" tank with a 75 mm gun and heavier armor than any German tank. The French Somua tank mounted a high-velocity 47 mm gun which was the hardest hitting weapon of any tank on the battlefield. The 100 British tanks had thicker armor and their 2-pounder gun was more effective than the German 37 mm gun. But where the British and the German tanks had 2-3 men crews, the French tanks had only one man who had the impossible task of doing everything himself in battle. Ridiculously, the "B" tank could only be aimed by moving the tank. Generally, the French tanks had inferior gun sights and their other tanks were hopelessly outclassed. But the most important and inexcusable failure of the French armor involved its limited operating range and the absence of radio communication. Even as late as 1940 when their final three armored divisions were formed, they contained only half as many tanks as a panzer division. Still if properly handled, they had the capability of providing substantial resistance against the German armored attacks. Their most critical blunder involved the wasteful dispersal of their armor among the infantry divisions so that it was impossible to stop the German panzers by employing massed armor. One historian, putting it simply, said the French had

as many tanks and they were better but "the French did not know how to use them...the Germans did."

In weapons the German 37 mm gun could not penetrate the heavy French tanks and the French 47 mm gun was superior to any weapon in the battle but, unfortunately, only sixteen divisions had them. Amazingly, before 1940 the French Army had no anti-tank mines and only a limited supply was available when the battle began. In artillery, however, the French were superior with 11,000 guns to 8,000 for the Germans, but it was an advantage which was off-set since none of them were motorized and they could be moved only by horsepower. The number and efficiency of French anti-aircraft weapons was grossly inadequate and the scandalous French deficiency in both defensive and offensive weapons deprived its strong manpower of adequate protection for themselves and for their country.

In the air the German superiority was overwhelming. In numbers of aircraft on the Western Front, as with equipment on the ground, the opponents were quite even. The Germans had about 3,000 aircraft and the French air force consisted of about the same number, but oddly enough, only about one-third of the French planes were used against the initial assault so that the Luftwffe dominated the skies over the battlefields. Field Marshal Herman Goering was able to use masses of bombers and fighters in support of the German advances while the French, for reasons which remained unexplained, failed to commit to the battle more than a part of their air force. As in the case of the deployment of their tanks, the French failed to make effective use of their aircraft with disastrous consequences for their freedom.

The final allocation of French ground forces meant that General Charles Huntziger's Second Army and General Andre Corap's Ninth Army would move up opposite the German Fourth, and Twelfth and Sixteenth Armies comprising forty-five divisions led by seven "armored" divisions that would occupy the Ardennes sector. Making the same blunder that the Americans would make just before the "Battle of the Bulge" in 1944, the French High Command did not expect any offensive action by the enemy from the Ardennes, and the weakest forces on the entire front were placed in that sector. Thus the defense of the vital 60-mile front from Namur along the Meuse to Sedan was left to the nine divisions of the Ninth Army which had only two divisions of light cavalry—half

armored and half on horseback. The cavalry, as if in an earlier war, was intended to serve as a screen to detect any advance by the enemy but could provide little protection from an armored assault. Furthermore, only two of Corap's divisions were regulars and the remainder were largely only partially trained older reservists, and his officers were mostly "over-aged hang-overs" from World War I. British General Alan Brooke described them as being slovenly without pride, with ungroomed horses, and dirty vehicles. Even French officers were shocked to find the units had little or no morale and their fortifications, which were half-finished and poorly built, were practically useless.

Allied plans called for Huntziger's Second Army to stand in place with his X Corps stationed near Sedan to keep the Germans from turning the northern flank of the Maginot Line. On the right the line was held by the 3rd North African Division, on the left by the second-rate 55th Division, and only the weak 71st Infantry Division was held in reserve. Before the battle Huntziger had complained about the poor state of morale, which was also ignored, and on the day the battle began nearly half of the men of the 71st Division were not even present to fight. It has often been pointed out that any reasonable examination of the disposition of the Allied and German forces before the attack would have easily predicted the outcome of the battle. As one historian put it, the Germans were prepared to fight World War II while the French were ready to renew the struggle of World War I.

In spite of many warnings and numerous alerts, the Dutch and the Belgians persisted in the ridiculous hope, against all reality, that their neutrality would be respected by the Nazis. So there was great shock and surprise over the suddenness and viciousness of the attack as the violent Nazi onslought began at 5:30 a.m. May 10, 1940. Without warning Luftwaffe bombers first struck airfields in Belgium and Holland destroying much of their air forces. Then gliders landed at bridges and fortresses, including the "invincible" Fort Eben Emal which was neutralized within one hour and surrendered its 1200 troops the next day. While the defenders managed to blow-up numerous bridges, many were captured intact. Paratroopers quickly landed at airfields, and even though the Dutch stubbornly held out for several days at Rotterdam, the Germans finally bombed the city into submission.

At the same time, following terrifying Stuka aerial attacks, Kuchler's Eighteenth Army with four divisions plus one panzer division suddenly struck the small Dutch army. Von Reichenau's Sixth Army with fifteen divisions plus two panzer divisions, headed towards Antwerp and Liege. But it was through Luxembourg and the Ardennes that Kluge's Fourth Army with twelve divisions and two panzer divisions, and List's Twelfth Army with fourteen divisions plus five panzer divisions, both relying on the speed of their motorized units and the confusing surprise of bombings and strafings by a 1,000 Luftwaffe planes, suddenly struck across the borders behind their concentrated armor to roll-up the Allied forces in Belgium. General Hoth's 5th and 7th Panzers raced for the Meuse between Namur and Dinant, General Reinhardt's 6th and 8th Panzers drove towards Revin and Montherme on the Meuse, and General Guderian's 1st, 2nd and 10th Panzer divisions rushed forward towards Sedan. At that time it was the largest armored armada ever assembled.

General Gamelin had no idea where the major Germans forces were and as soon as the attack began, the Belgians called for help, but since they had refused to work out mutual defensive plans in advance, movements were slow and there was much confusion. To the surprise of the British and the French, there were no Luftwaffe bombings to interfere with their progress since the Germans did not want to slow down the Allied rush forward into the trap that waited for them. Most of the French cavalry consisting of light armored divisions, half light tanks and half horses, got across the Dyle and the Meuse and set up screens for defensive positions in good order while the infantry and artillery lagged far behind. Intentionally without German opposition, the movement proceeded up to the Dyle Line more or less on schedule and Allied commanders, believing they were facing the German's major front, were confident as the British BEF, the French First and Seventh Armies, representing thirty divisions plus twenty-two Belgian divisions, rushed forward. With these successful advances, the Allies were confident they had a substantial advantage in men, tanks and guns over Reichenau's approaching Sixth Army which contained only fifteen divisions plus two panzer divisions.

Opposite the Ardennes sector the situation was completely different where, as the Germans knew, the weak French Ninth Army had been assigned the impossible task of holding the critical 60-mile line from Namur to Sedan on the Meuse, not knowing that it was the major objective of Germany's massed armor.

Comprised largely of untrained older men with inadequate weapons, tanks and motor transport, most of the French units had to advance on foot which not only delayed their arrival but had also exhausted the troops. Still overall, the Allied and German armies destined to clash in Belgium were about evenly matched. Once generally in position for battle, Allied strength stood at 157 divisions of which 114 were French, 11 British, 22 Belgian and 10 Dutch. The forces of France composed of 92 infantry divisions, six divisions of light and heavy armor, six of cavalry and ten divisions stationed in the Maginot Line. That meant the Allies actually had about twenty more divisions than the Germans. Stupidly, Gamelin and Georges had blundered badly by keeping thirty divisions out of the battle, almost one-third of the French forces, in the areas of the inactive Maginot Line. On the main battlefield, General Gaston Billotte's Army Group 1 contained 74 divisions of which nine were British, twenty-two Belgian, ten Dutch with four French armored divisions in reserve. That force, expecting to meet the head-on impact of the major German attack, was opposed by two German Army Groups which also totaled 74 divisions. The critical difference was that the German advance was spearheaded by ten armored divisions following a vicious and unexpected assault by the Luftwaffe.

As soon as the German attack was launched, General Henri Giraud's largely motorized Seventh Army responded by rushing up towards Holland and the Walcheren; the Belgians regrouped their forces to hold the line from above Antwerp to Louvain; the BEF and the crack French First Army headed for the Dyle between Louvain and Namur; and the Ninth Army moved up behind the Meuse from Dinant to Sedan where it joined the Second Army. But military actions rarely proceed as planned and the Allied advance into Belgium, which had been anticipated for years, could not have been well organized and executed due mainly to the neutrality of the Belgians. When the French and British forces reached the Dyle they were shocked to find that the Belgian fortifications had either not been built or were only partially completed. The Germans, of course, were elated to see that the Allies had moved forward as they had hoped and considered the operation to be going "according to plan," so much so that the Luftwaffe was ordered to continue its non-interference. Hitler, again convinced he had outsmarted his generals, almost wept with joy saying that France's strongest forces had "fallen right into my trap." And Gamelin, having seen that

the Germans had attacked in Holland and Belgium as he expected, was pleased and confident that his planning had been correct. Then oddly enough, after ordering air cover for the advance of the Seventh Army, he blunderingly limited other air activities to "pursuit and reconnaissance" instead of ordering air attacks on the rapidly advancing German armies.

Within two days and in spite of heroic resistance by the small but brave forces of the Dutch and the Belgians, the German forces poured almost unrestrained into the Low Countries. It was the same valiant but hopeless struggle of the Great War all over again and the desperate Dutch could not hold up the German onslought. The air defense of the Belgians was completely ineffective and most of their planes were quickly destroyed. Within two days Hoeppner's German tanks got past Liege and onto the Belgian plain where they clashed with the 1st French Cavalry Corps at Huy and Tirlemont in the first large tank battle in history. To the German's surprise, the heavier French tanks did not give way before the much larger German force and "a great victory" for the courageous French was celebrated in Paris. On the next day, however, a Luftwaffe attack opened up against the French resistance when more than a hundred tanks were destroyed.

By this time chaos was rampant within the French High Command. Instead of one supreme commander, incredibly, the French Army was divided into three ridiculous and generally confusing commands, and pathetically, there was practically no communication between them. Not even teletypes connected the three headquarters nor the field forces. Their telephones were notoriously unreliable and the telegraph service was inexcusably slow. The main headquarters had neither radios nor carrier pigeons and the usual means of communication were motorcycle dispatches and motorcar visits by commanders to their subordinates which most often involved lengthy delays and long absences from their posts. Consequently, commanders were generally isolated and had no way of knowing what was going on until it was too late. It took six hours or more to get a request for action to the air force. General Gamelin admitted it required two days for the execution of a general order to reach the front. In contrast, the Germans had an efficiently organized chain-of-command, all command posts had immediate communications, and their tanks could obtain almost immediate response for air support. As a result, once the battle got underway none of the Allied commanders really knew what was going on and, even had they known,

they had no reliable communications system available to order any effective defensive actions.

In the north in many places the small Belgian and Dutch forces outfought the invaders, but once the key fort of Eben Emael had fallen and the Albert Canal had been crossed, the central plains of Belgium lay open again to invasion by the dreaded "Hun." As the French concentrated their attention on the German advances in central Belgium, the armored offensive in the Ardennes continued to be overlooked. Since Belgian troops had been withdrawn from the Ardennes to help protect the cities, the German tanks were generally unopposed and faced only unmanned obstacles and blown bridges. Three great columns more than a hundred miles long with 1,200 to 1,500 tanks were headed towards the Meuse through the heavily wooded and mountainous terrain. Even after French air reconnaissance had revealed the assembled mass of tanks before the invasion, only a few harassing plane attacks were made against the crowded slowly moving columns. If only the barricades and the blown bridges had been manned considerable time could have been gained to strengthen defenses elsewhere. But tragically, the French had concluded the Germans would require at least several days to get through the Ardennes, so their 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th light tank divisions were ordered to merely skirmish with the approaching enemy until May 14, when strong reinforcements would counterattack German armor as it emerged from the Ardennes. Anthony Cave Brown describes it as "one of the most mysterious and catastrophic failures to appreciate and act upon intelligence in history."

By the night of May 12, the panzers had forced their way against light resistance to the Meuse at Dinant, Givet, Montherme and Sedan, and Erwin Rommel's 7th Panzers were first to cross the Meuse at Dinant. Masses of Luftwaffe planes cleared the way for armored attacks by bombing troops, roads and junctions causing much destruction and great disorder among the weak French cavalry forces. The assault crossed the Meuse at Sedan the next day after hours of Luftwaffe bombardment of the heights opposite the river followed by lengthy assaults by Stuka divebombers. Inexcusably, the Belgians had created no effective fortifications and the French defense of the Meuse was poorly organized and held by few men. Although strong reserves were available nearby manning the Maginot Line, none were called up to stop the assault and Allied air forces provided little protection. While there had been a late but determined effort to

hold the line at the Meuse with heavy losses, their ridiculous inability to depress their artillery to fire on the assault craft crossing the river permitted more than six German infantry battalions to cross the Meuse at Sedan and to overwhelm the defenders against little opposition.

When troops have little or no confidence in their leaders and, particularly, just before being attacked by a vastly superior and overwhelming enemy, military morale obviously declines. Then, as the enemy had begun to swarm over the Meuse, a false rumor began to circulate among the defenders that German tanks had broken through their lines threatening encirclement. Panic broke out and, according to Second Army's General Edmond Ruby, deserting officers, gunners, and soldiers "were mixed together, terror-stricken and in the grip of mass-hysteria." As the soldiers streamed to the rear the panic spread as far as the city of Rheims some sixty miles distance. When General Huntziger was informed of the debacle, instead of specific instructions, he merely left "appropriate action" up to his commanders and most of them immediately withdrew their units from the line. Upon learning there was no way to obtain additional forces to stop the breakthrough, General Georges knew nothing to do but to weep. Had there not been so many unpardonable blunders adequate reserve forces and tanks would have been available to eliminate the beachheads before the Germans could place their tanks across the Meuse.

Unfortunately by May 14, four days after the assault began, the French had their last realistic opportunity to stop the onrushing enemy. Near Dinant General Corap managed to capture Rommel's advance motorcycle troops but failed to use his superior forces to counterattack Rommel's leading tanks. Instead, he called for help from the French tank corps, but after requiring fourteen hours to cover twenty-five miles, the tanks had exhausted their fuel and Corap's forces had to withdraw. In the center of the Ardennes offensive, Corap's 102nd division had mounted a strong defense which held back the 6th and 8th panzers for three days, but without reinforcements it had no chance of success. At Sedan to the south, even though Huntziger's tanks had initially held against Guderian's lead tanks, as at Dinant there was no follow-up counterattack which could have stopped the advance. So the panzers poured across quickly-built pontoon bridges while German fighter aircraft and accurate anti-aircraft fire inflicted heavy losses on Allied planes which had failed to stop the rapidly enlarging invasion of

Belgium and France. The RAF lost forty bombers and fifty fighters and many planes were damaged. The 1st, 2nd and 10th Panzers could not be stopped and soon rumors began to spread among French troops that the panzers were coming from every direction. Such rumors became the "fifth column" which caused much fear and panic, troops began to fire upon each other, insignia was removed from uniforms to avoid capture, vehicles and weapons were abandoned, mass desertions began, and chaos reigned.

Finally, instead of concentrating his forces to turn back the Germans streaming across at Sedan and fearing the Germans would flank the Maginot Line and move on Paris, Huntziger made the worst possible blunder by pulling his left wing away from the Sedan area back to the western end of the Maginot forts. That created the monstrous disaster of leaving a forty-mile wide gap literally undefended through which the panzers could drive at full speed into France. And in yet another tragedy for the bungled fate of the Allies, on the same day the Dutch had surrendered as Rotterdam fell to the invaders. The next morning the Premier of France telephoned Winston Churchill and told him, "We are beaten; we have lost the battle."

Reichenau's Sixth Army performed their important secondary role by moving across the Albert Canal into the northern plains west of Liege to engage the major portion of the Allied forces. The Germans had been careful not too press too strongly because they wanted to avoid pushing the main strength of the Allies out of the pocket which would be surrounded. As expected the Belgians withdrew before the German advance and regrouped behind the Dyle between Louvain and just north of Antwerp. Then, with the Dutch surrender, Kuchler's Eighth Army was able to direct its advance against the French Seventh Army which was straddled across the Dutch-Belgian border, and the Belgians, British and French managed to temporarily hold up Reichenau's Army at the Dyle Line. Actually, the Germans had been forced to admit that the attacks of their panzer divisions had failed in the north.

But to the south of Namur the battle had totally disintegrated. The French Ninth Army had been completely defeated and had been seized by "utter pandemonium." The IInd Corps was in full retreat and by the time it reached the French border, it consisted of only a handful of unequipped soldiers. The XIth Corp, which had done most of the fighting, was left exposed and withdrew back

to France leaving only a few scattered units which did their best to stop the enemy, but most units fled in panic. When a last desperate stand was attempted by the remnants of the XIth at Maubeuge, they found that the defensive line there had also been vacated. The XLIst Corps at Montherme and Mezieres had fought relatively well and were ready to continue their stand against the 6th and 8th Panzers when they were suddenly ordered to pull out because of the danger of being outflanked at Namur and Sedan. By nightfall the German bridgehead at Sedan was thirty miles wide and fifteen miles deep. Then the entire French defense at the Ardennes sector had suddenly collapsed leaving all the remaining Allied armies vulnerable to being cutoff and surrounded by the powerful German armored thrust which was headed directly for the English Channel.

By May 15 all seven German panzer divisions were well across the Meuse. Guderian, having easily turned aside French counterattacks, saw the huge gap in the French lines ahead of him. Instead of waiting for his motorized infantry to catch up, and against the warnings of his superior officers, he risked an Allied attack on his unprotected left flank where the bulk of the French Second Army waited undamaged and uninvolved. In one of the most important decisions of the war, Guderian ordered his armor to wheel to the right and to go all out for Rethel some thirty miles southeast of Sedan. If successful, his drive would separate the entire French Second and Ninth Armies. But Huntziger, with the French Third Armored and the Third Motorized divisions, in addition to thirty divisions behind him in the Maginot Line, blindly if not cowardly, failed to counterattack Guderian's long exposed flank which could have trapped the leading German panzers.

The tragedy was that none of the Allies really knew what had happened. In fact, as late as the night of May 15, the main Allied line of resistance from Antwerp to Namur was still intact. Thirty-nine Allied divisions faced fifteen divisions of the German Sixth Army with two divisions in reserve. But since the Germans were strong enough to hold off any offensive action by the Allies, the situation was ideal for the Wehrmacht. Even as Winston Churchill conferred with the French commanders at Paris on May 16, he did not know that German tanks were then more than sixty miles beyond Sedan prepared to push on to either Paris or the coast. He did manage to ask the critical question, "Where is the strategic reserve?" and he was flabbergasted when he was told that there was

none! It was one of the greatest surprises in Churchill's life for he had never heard of a great army having no reserves to counter an attack. Adolf Hitler continued to worry, however, for fear that an Allied reserve force would suddenly strike the long and lightly-defended armored penetrations. He could not possibly imagine there would be no French counterattacks!

In the north the panzer forces were sweeping through the Low Countries followed by two motorized divisions while Guderian's panzers were racing across Northern France bypassing Paris to trap the Allies in Belgium. Even though the Germans were still opposed by some 800,000 Allied troops, in less than a week the battle had been decided for it finally became apparent to the Allied High Command that they were being trapped. General Gamelin belatedly ordered the forty French, Belgian and British divisions in the north to disengage from the enemy and to withdraw back to France by wheeling to the southwest to fight their way through the thin over-extended panzer spearheads that were streaming across northern France. At the same time, fresh French units from the Maginot Line would be ordered to strike the Germans from the Somme. Unfortunately, in another critical bungle, Gamelin was suddenly replaced by General Maxime Weygand, who required three critical days to decide what to do. By that time, the Germans had rushed infantry to support their advancing tanks and, as the French wasted several divisions by throwing them against the on-rushing tanks in a piecemeal fashion, the German lines could not be broken. Moreover, the Allied forces in Belgium were trying to escape southwards but the hard-driving enemy armor was forcing them into a rapidly decreasing area with no chance of a breakout. Inexplicably, the French had made no substantial attacks from the south, and Guderian, having met little effective resistance, decided to press on his drive for the channel. In spite of several futile Allied attempts to stop the onrushing armor, the trap was successfully closed when the 2nd Panzers reached Abbeville on May 20, only ten days after the initial German attack. With the Allied entrapment successfully completed, the Germans excitedly expected to totally annihilate the remainder of the forces of the West and to eliminate both France and Britain as enemies of the Nazi Reich.

Suddenly and totally unexpected, just when the total destruction of the Allied forces was certain, Hitler ordered his tanks to stop and stand without further assault. The German commanders were astounded to be deprived of total victory

just when one of the world's most remarkable and spectacular military feats was being accomplished. Although Hitler's reasons are still strongly debated, some argue that he believed that by sparing British forces from the embarrassment of their total defeat, an armistice might be negotiated that would avoid the later possibility of a two-front war which could be disastrous for Germany. Others hold the view that the German High Command had written Allied forces off and were already turning its attention to the task of conquering the large remaining areas of France for which they wished to preserve German armor. In any case, Hitler's decision was certainly influenced by Herman Goering's boast that his Luftwaffe could finish the destruction of British and French forces at Dunkirk which would enable the panzers to be saved to complete the conquest of France.

Consequently, largely as a result of the aggressive attacks of the RAF against the Luftwaffe and the enormous armada of naval and private vessels which crossed the channel, 320,000 Allied troops were successfully rescued in a miraculous operation. While panzer divisions were held up south of Dunkirk for two days by Hitler, their commanders were furious knowing they could have eliminated the remaining Allied forces on the beachhead. Had they done so, with the loss of the escaping BEF, Britain would have been practically undefended. Then, surely Adolf Hitler would have quickly invaded England without the necessity of waiting for Luftwaffe domination of the air over England. And, with Britain and France out of the conflict and no two-front war, Germany would have likely defeated the Soviet Union and become the master of all of Europe. As it turned out, the Fuehrer's untimely interference with Wehrmacht affairs was clearly a blunder of great magnitude and undoubtedly changed world history. It was another Hitler decision which lost the war for Nazi Germany.

Thankfully, the Battle of Dunkirk with a "miracle of improvisation" by the British people, rescued the bulk of the British army from certain destruction. Still, there was much loss of life and many wounded incurred during the evacuation. When the last troops got away on June 3, only 40,000 French troops holding the lines remained to surrender while 200,000 British and 120,000 French soldiers had successfully escaped. Afterwards, the Germans began immediately to prepare to conquer the rest of France. Although they had successfully cut-off and destroyed the Allied armies in the Low Countries and part of Northern France, ninety percent of France still remained in the hands of

some sixty French divisions. However, most of the remaining forces in France consisted of disorganized, demoralized and ill-equipped second-rate soldiers. The greatly out-matched French did not know whether to continue to fight or retreat. Their choices were to either resist at the Somme and the Aisne or to withdraw from the Maginot Line and make a final stand behind the Seine and the Loire. They still had more than 1,200 modern tanks which Colonel Charles DeGaulle wanted to deploy north of Paris and south of Rheims, backed up by three motorized infantry divisions, to strike German armored columns as they broke through French defenses. But Weygand believed their forces were not strong enough to fight, and as they withdrew, they continued to use the same tactics which had already so miserably failed. Unfortunately for France, with the German juggernaut already on French soil, Weygand and Marshal Henri Petain knew that the end was near and the future of France was doomed.

On June 5 Hitler's panzers turned southwards against a defeated France which now stood alone before the overwhelming power of the enemy invaders. Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt had assembled ninety-five divisions including ten panzer divisions reaching some 200 miles from the channel to the western end of the Maginot Line near Sedan. To defend France, Weygand had less than half as many divisions that included only three armored divisions and three of cavalry containing less than a third of their tanks. Two entire German airfleets would be almost unopposed since Allied aircraft were practically non-existent after the withdrawal of the RAF back to England. While some of the French troops fought valiantly, by the third day Erwin Rommel's tanks broke through the French lines and rushed to within twenty-four miles of the Seine. The following day the French lost the brief Battle of the Somme and the Germans reached the Seine placing them only forty miles west of Paris. By June 9 the Germans were across the Aisne and soon were in position to flank the Maginot Line and to begin the envelopment of Paris. There the French put up another stubborn resistance against von Rundstedt's massed six panzer divisions, but by the second day Rheims was taken and half of the resistance of the entire French forces had been eliminated.

As the Germans approached Paris, the French High Command complained that the British had sent no planes nor new troops and were more interested in protecting its small forces still in France and preserving its forces in Britain for its own defense, than to help defend France against the Germans. Also Generals

Weygand and Petain, now seized by defeatism, were calling for an end to the "unequal struggle," and claimed that the English had forced France into the war. The final infamous "coup de grace" occurred on June 10 when Mussolini joined Germany by declaring war on France. Churchill challenged the French "to defend Paris," but Weygand declared it an "open city," and the High Command left Paris. In that the German pincers were closing in from the east and the west, the French commanders understandably concluded it would be useless to fight and to destroy "the City of Light." So Hitler's "jubilant troops" entered the French capital on June 14 without opposition and the hated Nazis would occupy "The world's most beautiful city" for four long years.

After the fall of Paris the German pincers continued to drive southwards and on June 16 the Rhone Valley was reached. By then Weygand and his commanders were pressing for an armistice and the French cabinet voted to surrender. President Reynaud resigned and Marshal Petain formed a new cabinet which asked for an armistice on June 16. Hitler agreed to an armistice four days later and forced the French into the deepest possible humiliation by staging the signing of the surrender documents in the same railway car at Compiegne where Germany had capitulated in 1918. In five weeks the Nazis had accomplished what the death and suffering of millions of Germans had failed to attain in World War I. Meanwhile Josef Stalin, after grabbing the Baltic states and Bessarabia while Hitler was busy in the West, sent the Fuehrer congratulations on the "splendid success of the German Wehrmacht." It was either one of the most successful military victories ever or the so-called British-French defense had been one of the greatest military failures of all time. Whatever, the Nazi dictator believed not only that his Nazi legions were unbeatable, but he was also confident that the war with the West was over, that a defeated and largely undefended Britain had no choice but to seek an armistice. Then he would be free to turn to the East and destroy the Soviet Union to obtain his goal for his Third Reich to become the unchallenged master of Europe!

By the time the armistice took effect German armor had occupied all of France from Bordeaux on the coast across to Switzerland below Lyons, except for a pocket of the surrounded French armies behind the Maginot Line, which had remained largely intact. The conditions imposed on the French were hard, cruel and shrewd which not only divided France into occupied and unoccupied areas,

but also created a political division as well, thereby splitting the nation between the defeatists and those that wished to carry on the struggle from abroad. Looking for a scapegoat, French leaders charged the defeat to betrayal by Britain and were convinced the British could not be counted on to continue the fight against Germany. Then later, when Britain attacked and sank elements of the French fleet in North Africa to prevent their use by the Germans, the French were so furious that they advocated war against Britain. Petain and Weygand, along with former Premier Pierre Laval, held that under the circumstances France had no choice but to cooperate with Germany. Laval, with treachery that would later cost his life, manipulated the parliamentary "suicide" of the French Third Republic on July 10, which led to the formation of the infamous "collaborationist" Vichy government under Marshal Petain.

At a cost of 27,000 dead, 111,000 wounded and 18,000 missing, equaling about one-third of Germany's losses in the single Battle of Verdun in the First World War, the Nazis had defeated the combined strength of the Western Allies in what was called one of the "largest, shortest and most decisive military campaigns in history." In the defense of her freedom France lost 90,000 dead, 200,000 wounded and 1.9 million prisoners and missing. Other total Allied casualties were 68,000 British, 23,000 Belgian, and 10,000 Dutch. Aircraft losses were 1,200 for the Germans, 900 British, and 560 French with half lost on the ground.

The major responsibility for the "Fall of France" must be placed upon the French people themselves. Seldom in history has one country committed so many blunders regarding its failure to face up to the deadly circumstances which threatened it's security and survival. The blunders by France were so inexcusably devastating as to be almost totally incomprehensible to this day. Principally, their major blunders were that they depended on the outmoded Verdun defensive mentality of World War I; they failed to develop modern military equipment and strategy; they lacked political courage and leadership; unrealistic reliability was placed on the Maginot Line; no effective defensive alliances were developed with other European countries; their military command was divisive; no effective cooperative plans were made with their Allies; they were without efficient communications; their strategic reserve was non-existent; the static troops in the Maginot fortresses were not used to prevent the breakthrough at the Meuse; their defensive measures in the Ardennes were ineffective; even their inadequate

intelligence information was ignored; they failed to exploit the vulnerability of German armor in the Ardennes; they refused to continue the fight against Nazism from North Africa; and generally, they repeated their failures to take reasonable and logical actions to stem the armored invasion with an effectively planned and employed defense of their country.

The British also bear a heavy responsibility for the debacle. British lack of reality and fuzzy politics had much to do with Germany's revival after World War I as a powerful military force. As for military capability, Great Britain was even more unprepared for World War II than were the French and her disappointing commitment to the struggle in both men and equipment was constantly challenged by her allies. From the beginning, Britain's leaders refused to accept the possibility of war that arose from Hitler's aggressions which they shamefully appeased. They demonstrated poor leadership by failing to provide modern equipment and adequately trained military forces, and their totally inadequate and ineffective contributions to the defense of Europe were inexcusable. Once the battle in the West got underway, British cooperation with France was consistently difficult, and they continued to put their own interests ahead of Allied interests in the planning and execution of actions to meet the enemy's aggression. Then, when Britain managed to withdraw most of her troops safely at Dunkirk while French troops held off the enemy, the French had some justification for charging that they had to fight the enemy alone after the British deserted them.

The poor Dutch, with Belgium berween them and the French, had been largely dependent upon the Belgian determination not to offend the Germans for fear of the reprisal of invasion. Unfortunately, one of the most influential blunders affecting the fate of the West was committed by King Leopold of Belgium for naively believing the Germans would respect his neutrality, in addition to his refusal to coordinate with France and Britain in the development of an effective defense against aggression. So the battle was lost before it began. Surely, had the Allies set-up in advance properly prepared defenses with adequate forces in place along the Meuse and the line of the Dyle to Walcheren, at least the German assault might have been held-up. There can be little doubt, however, that with the superiority of the German's tactics and weapons together with the overwhelming power of the Luftwaffe, Germany would have won the struggle regardless of what the Allies may have done. But, better defenses and strategy

could have, at least, delayed and perhaps changed some of the battle's awesome consequences.

Obviously, France and Britain should have put up a more effective resistance which might have stopped the German offensive long enough for more troops to have been brought into the battle from the Maginot Line. Even without time available to organize their defense, Britain could have committed more men and planes. If the conflict had been longer-lasting, Stalin well might have been tempted to overreach himself in East Europe requiring a military response from the Germans, or Japan might have been tempted to attack the Soviet rear, which could have brought the Germans into war with the Soviets earlier. Even the Battle of Britain may have been avoided. The United States might have entered the conflict sooner and the war would have likely ended with an armistice instead of the disastrous policy of "unconditional surrender." The absence of but one of the major blunders, or the change of any significant event during the Battle of France, could have had a profound effect upon the course of World War II.

In any case, with the exception of the "miracle" at Dunkirk, the consequences of the Fall of France could hardly have been more disastrous for the West. As B. H. Liddell Hart has written, the success of the Germans "could easily have been prevented but for the opportunities presented to them by Allied blunders—blunders that were largely due to the prevalence of out-of-date ideas." By their appeasement and by their disgraceful military performance in France and the Lowlands, the British and the French had inexcusably and shamefully failed to save the world from the heinous consequences of another war with Germany.

Chapter 4

The Battle of Britain

The Battle of Britain was one of the most decisive battles in World War II and it was the most important air battle in history. It not only resulted in the first defeat of the victorious German Nazis but it miraculously enabled Great Britain to survive to continue the desperate struggle against the totalitarian dictators of Germany and Italy. It was also a dramatic triumph of bravery and valor over the evil, powerful and brutal forces of armed aggression. Furthermore, it mercifully preserved the opportunity for an eventual Allied victory, it ranked in importance with the Battle of Moscow as a turning point for the outcome of World War II, and it enabled the survival of democratic freedom throughout the world.

The Germans had spectacularly routed the Allies in France. While 320,000 Allied soldiers had been evacuated at Dunkirk, they needed to be reorganized, trained and re-equipped as well as to have their morale restored. The British army had suffered a disastrous and humiliating defeat and the nation lay unprotected and vulnerable to an imminent invasion by a powerful and brutal enemy. The Germans were convinced that Britain and France had been defeated so completely that they would be incapable of further serious resistance. As Britain stood alone against his powerful and invincible forces, Adolf Hitler believed the war would soon be over and that it was apparent that nothing short of another miracle could save Great Britain.

The German campaign in France and the Lowlands had been a shocking success due to the terrifying effectiveness of the new concept of the aggressive mobility of armored warfare, supplemented by disruptive and frightening dive-bombing attacks that had so effectively frustrated and demoralized Allied forces. German armor, preceded by airborne attacks against unprepared defenses, powerfully smashed through all opposition and raced towards the English

Channel. As inadequate defenses collapsed, demoralized troops retreated as large areas quickly fell before the invaders. In merely sixteen days German tanks had dashed across Holland, Belgium and France, and trapped the British and French forces at Dunkirk. The battle had ended quickly and Germany had achieved an astounding victory over the combined larger Allied forces. In little more than two weeks Hitler's armies had accomplished what the Germans had failed to do in four years of the horrendous stalemate of World War I. According to B.H. Liddell Hart, it was the greatest military disaster in history and he said it happened because "the Allied leaders did things too late or did the wrong thing, and in the end did nothing effective to avert disaster."

The first "miracle" was that when the Allied armies had been completely surrounded and their destruction was certain, Adolf Hitler suddenly issued his controversial stop order just before his armor could destroy and capture the remaining enemy forces. He believed the British had been so thoroughly beaten they would gladly accept an armistice, then he could conquer and destroy the Soviet Union and acquire vast resources and "living space" for Germany. While the evacuation of troops at Dunkirk was hailed by Allied propaganda as a heroic and "miraculous delivery" of British and French troops, in reality it had been a devastating disaster followed by a desperate retreat across the channel to Britain. That left the small British nation practically undefended, while the world expected that Hitler's powerful forces would quickly defeat and occupy Britain, leaving only the Soviet Union to be conquered for the supremacy of the Nazi dictatorship over all of Europe.

By its fast and relatively easy defeat of Poland and the West, along with its occupation of Denmark and Norway, the German armed forces were then feared throughout Europe. Their revolutionary new tactics of rapid and powerful aircraft and armored attacks had appeared to be invincible and the world's "strongest" army of France, along with Britain's forces, had been completely devastated. And as the armies of both France and Britain had retreated with little or no resistance, they had lost almost all of their tanks and weapons. Furthermore, the limited number of fighters in the Royal Air Force had been reduced by 232 planes during only the first three days of the battle.

By June 2, 1940 the last Allied troops had been rescued at Dunkirk and Britain braced itself for the onslought of the hated Germans for which it was

pitifully unprepared. Since Britain could no longer defend itself Hitler believed that Britain, if given a chance, would sue for peace. But the indomitable Winston Churchill refused to concede defeat and challenged his countrymen to an "inflexible resolve to continue the war." That seemed to be mostly patriotic rhetoric, however, with just twenty-nine weak, demoralized and ill-equipped British divisions, of which only six had armor or artillery, to hold-off the forty-one German divisions being assembled across the Channel. Having observed the important combat role of the Luftwaffe in the attacks on Poland and France, the defenders correctly concluded that the enemy would first need to control the air over Britain before an amphibious assault would be attempted. Obviously, a "bloody" battle to the finish in the air could be expected. Fortunately for Britain, while her selfish policy of refusing to commit her RAF reserves undoubtedly contributed to the loss of the Battle of France, ultimately it proved to be vital for her self-defense. As their first defensive measures, fighter patrols were immediately maintained over Britain and bombers were sent over German airfields along the coast. Even though they now stood alone without allies, the "plucky" Britons showed the world, as well as the Germans, that the fight by no means was over. As Churchill so eloquently told Parliament, "We shall never surrender." Standing to a man behind the Prime Minister, Great Britain remained undaunted in the struggle with a vastly superior and potentially overwhelming opponent and never faltered in their determination to fight to the last man in defense of their freedom.

Once France had fallen, Germany was caught completely unprepared to pursue the next phase of battle which could have quickly brought about the fulfillment of Adolf Hitler's dream of world conquest. It remains inexplicable that the German General Staff, normally considered to have no equal in the efficient management of military operations, had failed to prepare contingency planning for the invasion of Great Britain. Wars generally are not begun unless it is believed they can be won. An established axiom of war holds that a complete victory in battle can rarely be gained without an immediate pursuit following a retreat after a successful attack. While it was true that the Allies had collapsed so quickly that no one, including the Germans, expected the Battle of France to end so soon, there was no excuse for the Germans to commit such a gross error of not having a contingency plan for every possible eventuality. There was no stand-by

plan for the assault on Britain, and no planning had been made for training for amphibious landings, for the construction of landing craft, nor for supporting operations by naval and air forces. Incredibly, not even aircraft production had been given a war-time priority since Hitler had not wanted to alarm the German people over the possibility of a lengthy war.

In spite of such blunders, the sudden and unexpected disaster for the Allied forces gave Germany an unprecedented opportunity to remove Britain quickly from the war. There could hardly have been a more favorable opportunity for a successful invasion, particularly, if it was undertaken before Britain could build resources for a more effective defense. William L. Shirer believed it was due to a "land warfare" mentality, and while it was probable that the Wehrmacht could have crushed Britain quickly, the Germans had no idea how to cope with the English Channel. Hitler had admitted, "On land I am a hero, but on water I am a coward." It was a neglect which would greatly determine the fate of Germany. Hitler's failure to attack Britain immediately after Dunkirk was a colossal mistake which wasted Germany's best chance to eliminate Britain from the war. Together with the Fuehrer's disastrous decision to divide his forces just when the conquest of Moscow was assured, it was one of the dictator's two greatest blunders which most decidedly denied him victory in World War II.

During the Dunkirk escape the RAF had been used only defensively to help save the greatest possible number of Allied forces, and that had added to the German confidence that the British were weak and could be easily eliminated. So Luftwaffe operations against Britain were hastily planned in three phases: first, the RAF would be eliminated from the skies over the channel and all shipping passing through the channel would be destroyed; second, massive attacks against airbases, defenses and aircraft factories with combined bombers and fighters; and third, to maintain an aerial cover for the invasion coded Operation SEA LION.

Soon after Dunkirk, the Germans launched "the battle of the Channel" to clear it of British shipping. They also hoped that would draw the RAF out over the channel where it could be shot down, after which the invasion would follow under protection from the air. Immediately waves of Me 109's began to patrol the waterway. But the wary British restricted their shipping while Fighter Command refused to be entrapped, thereby limited its response, and gained invaluable time

to build-up its resources. Even so, the Luftwaffe quickly learned that the RAF was far from finished and would be a formidable opponent.

By early July it was apparent to Hitler that Winston Churchill and the British were determined to fight and must be overcome by military force. Operation SEA LION was ordered to transport attacking forces from coastal harbors between the Scheldt and the Seine with amphibious landings on the English coast between Folkstone and Brighton, while airborne forces would seize control of the Dover area. By landing ten divisions over the first four days; with a second wave of six armored and three motorized divisions; a third wave of nine infantry divisions; and a fourth wave of eight infantry divisions; a strong bridgehead could be seized. With a total assault force of forty divisions involved, the first wave alone would require 155 transports and some 3,000 smaller craft. Accordingly, preparations for assembling the troops and the necessary cross-channel transport were immediately begun, but could not be completed before mid-September.

On July 16 Adolf Hitler issued Operational Directive 16: "As England, in spite of the hopelessness of her military position, has so far shown herself unwilling to come to any compromise, I have decided to prepare for, and if necessary carry out, an invasion of England...and, if necessary, the island will be occupied." Alexander McKee considers it to have been the most critical decision made by Hitler during the war. While German army commanders were generally optimistic that Britain could be taken, and recommended that the assaults occupy a wide front to disperse British naval and air resistance, naval officers were properly worried about the power of the British naval forces, and successfully argued that the invasion could not possibly be won without air superiority. On August 1, the Nazi Fuehrer commanded the Luftwaffe to destroy the Royal Air Force.

Air Marshal Herman Goering accepted the challenge with "customary bombast," being confident his Luftwaffe would quickly bring down the already crippled RAF and destroy Britain's capacity to resist the invasion. He assigned the aerial offensive to Albert Kesselring's Air Fleet 2 in the Calais area, and Hugo Sperrle's Air Fleet 3 stationed in the Paris area, with a combined total of 875 high-level bombers, 316 dive bombers and 929 fighters. The Me-109 fighter, however, as the major defender of German bombers, had a very limited range of

only 412 miles from its base. With such a short flight time of only ninety minutes, their fighter escorts could only protect half of their bombers at any one time which proved to be a highly critical deficiency.

Perhaps the greatest liability of the German military was its intelligence services. Repeatedly throughout the war, it failed to discover and report information that was essential for the success of its most important operations. The first of its major intelligence blunders involved the inability of German intelligence to inform the Luftwaffe which of Britain's airbases were occupied by the RAF Fighter Command. Perhaps more importantly, they were unable to provide any up-to-date reports about Britain's industrial capacity. If Goering had known that only two factories produced the renowned Rolls Royce engines, and that Spitfire frames were made in only one factory, the RAF could have been practically eliminated early in the struggle. They also erred significantly by underestimating Britain's aircraft production by fifty percent and grossly overestimated the availability of fighter pilots.

Germany's wartime intelligence reports, unbelievably, made no mention of the RAF's well-organized radar defense and radio communication network even though the system had been in operation since before the war. Nor did they know that the British radar system could spot aircraft up to 150 miles away and that their radio control would enable them to concentrate their fighters "at the right place at the right time." Although British radar installations had been captured in France, still the Germans failed to recognize the importance of the system to both offensive and defensive air operations. And after the Germans occupied the coast of France, they made the inexcusable mistake of assuming that the enemy system would be unable to handle the heavy traffic of their massed attacks on England. Two critical blunders followed: first, the Germans assumed that the most important enemy radar operational centers were underground when, actually, they were vulnerably exposed above ground at the sector stations; and, second, they believed the RAF fighters were restricted to the local areas of their bases which would limit their effectiveness against massed Luftwaffe fighter and bomber attacks.

Meanwhile Goering, like Hitler, was convinced that the war would be over quickly and planned for the Luftwaffe to immediately attack Britain before it could recover from its retreat from France. First, a massive air attack on Southern

England would precede an airborne invasion, then air transport shuttle flights would bring over five Wehrmacht divisions, followed by five more divisions by sea under the protective cover of the German Luftwaffe. It was a plan which, undoubtedly, would have been successful if it had been undertaken before the British had time to recover from the disaster of Dunkirk. But Hitler, convinced that Britain had lost the war, continued to believe that if an honorable way could be found, Britain would agree to peace with Germany. Actually, many Britons, including some of her most important leaders, shared Hitler's view and were opposed to any further resistance against Germany.

The resources of the RAF had been greatly reduced in the battle for France, by the necessity of supporting Britain's forces overseas, and to help maintain the nation's essential lifelines across the Atlantic. During the escape from Dunkirk, only a weak and outclassed RAF had been hurriedly sent up against the much stronger and more experienced Luftwaffe, in a desperate attempt to save the defeated Allied forces. By June 22, 1940 France had surrendered and Holland and Belgium had also been lost to the Nazis. Moreover, only the aggressive action of the remaining British Spitfires and Hurricanes, helped by some bad weather, had prevented Goering from fulfilling his boast to "destroy the enemy." When Hitler had suddenly held back the armor and the Luftwaffe which allowed the Allies to escape, it was believed that he expected the British to make peace. Others, however, suggest that von Runstedt had requested the halt "so that more infantry could be brought up." But the definitive reason seems to have been Hitler's acceptance of Goering's offer to use the Luftwaffe against the heavy concentration of enemy troops at Dunkirk, since the German armor would be needed for the conquest of the rest of France.

After Dunkirk, the German Luftwaffe saw no way that the small and crippled Royal Air Force could possibly stand up to their formidable might in the Battle of Britain. At the end of the campaign in the West, Germany had some 4,500 first-line planes compared to only 2,900 for Britain. Most fortunately, the quality of RAF's latest aircraft had advanced beyond that of the Luftwaffe. Of the greatest importance, their sophisticated radar system was capable of providing vital assistance for both defensive and offensive operations. While the Germans also had radar, their system had been designed principally for defensive operations. Other great advantages for the British involved their ability to use

their own airports and facilities which gave them the ability for quick responses, refueling, concentration and turn-around and, equally important, by the defense of their homeland they were able to recover most of their pilots after being shot down. When German pilots went down they were generally either killed or captured.

Most of Germany's planes had been designed and produced before the war and once the war was underway, many of their aircraft became out-dated. Furthermore, Germany's pre-war armaments build-up had been geared towards greater production of other offensive "blitzkrieg weapons." The air forces had been conceived as an adjunct to the German Army with the major responsibility of providing offensive support for ground troops. As a consequence, priority was given to production of dive-bombers and medium bombers which proved to be highly effective in Poland and in France. But the lack of long-range heavy bombers would prove to be a decisive deficiency in bombing large industrial and civilian areas in Britain. Nor were their on-line fighters as up-to-date with the speed, firepower and range that would be required for offensive operations in the skies over Great Britain..

The medium bombers of the Luftwaffe were the Dornier-17 and the Heinkel-IIIH, and while they carried the brunt of the battle reasonably well, they became obsolete because of their short range, light bomb load, and were highly vulnerable to enemy fighters. The Junkers-88 dive-bomber had been Germany's most effective aircraft for supporting ground attacks on the continent, but were generally unsuitable and ineffective over Britain. It was too slow, its armor was inadequate, and it became "a piece of cake" for the faster and more powerful fighters of the RAF.

The Messerschmidt-109, as the basic fighter in the Luftwaffe, was equipped with two machine guns and two 20mm canon, had a maximum speed of 345 miles an hour, and it was an excellent aircraft against enemy fighters and bombers. Unfortunately for the Germans during the Battle of Britain, the Me-109's had to be used almost exclusively as escorts for bomber assaults on Britain which limited their use against RAF fighters. Also, its limited range became a critical deficiency during the battle since its fuel capacity permitted only eighty to ninety minutes of flight. After flying to and from England from France, only twenty minutes were left for its mission. When the twin-engine Me-110 had

been developed with double the range of the Me-109, it failed to overcome the major inadequacies of the Me-109, since Britain's best fighter remained twenty miles per hour faster. By largely restricting their initial priority to ground-support bombers, there was a disastrous shortage of fighter aircraft and fighter pilots which critically limited the Luftwaffe's effectiveness throughout the war.

In spite of such shortcomings, the Luftwaffe was the most powerful air force in the world and it had gained the reputation of being invincible. Its successes had been spectacular and the morale of its personnel was extremely high. As to the enemy, German intelligence reports represented the RAF as being weak and not prepared for battle against the undefeated Luftwaffe, and the Germans believed the Brits would be a pushover. And they would have been right had there been no German intelligence blunders. Once again, like many other times during the war, the failure of Germany to establish effective intelligence resources lead the German Luftwaffe to commit a number of inexcusable blunders to the great benefit of the Reich's enemy.

Actually, the condition of the RAF was not nearly as bad as the Germans believed. It had good commanders, maximum use had been made of little time to prepare to do battle, and Britain's defenses were well planned. Some foresighted advances had been made recognizing the important role of aircraft in modern warfare and, unlike the Germans, first priority was placed on the defensive advantage of fighters rather than on offensive bombers. Also, important progress had been made on aircraft design and manufacture of fighters, and the training of aircrews had received the highest priority. Even though Winston Churchill had called for every available plane to be sent to France to stop the German advance, Air Marshall Hugh Dowding of Fighter Command had successfully insisted that if all his planes were lost with the defeat of France, it would mean the defeat of Britain. Thus there were planes on hand not only to defend the evacuation at Dunkirk but, afterwards, to hold off the Germans long enough for the air force to recover more of its strength. Immediately after Dunkirk less than 500 serviceable fighters remained in the RAF. But in the first month after Dunkirk, knowing they were fighting for survival, dedicated patriots turned out 446 new fighters. Empowered by their fight for freedom, the people of the small British Isles, inspired by Winston Churchill and remarkably well led by Lord

Beaverbrook, built more aircraft than the entire German Reich and its occupied territories for the remainder of the war.

As the principal defensive weapon at the time of Britain's greatest peril, the Hurricane fighter brought down eighty percent of the German planes shot down during the battle. It was such a strongly-built and dependable aircraft that it was called "a flying gun-platform," and its armament consisted of eight machine guns which were later increased to twelve with four 20 mm canons. However, it was slower, more vulnerable, and could not fly as high as the German Me-109. Gradually, the Hurricane was supplemented by the most famous fighter of World War II—the Spitfire. It was superior to the Hurricane with its slight advantage of speed, maneuverability, and ability to out-turn the Me-109 in a dogfight, and with its superb Rolls-Royce engine, it was "a formidable weapon." There was, however, a serious default resulting from one of Britain's major errors of the war. If the Spitfire was forced into a steep nose-dive the engine would often conk out and the plane and the pilot were lost. In 1940 Britain had managed to obtain the fuel-injection device from a Me-109 that prevented engine shut-down, but instead of recognizing its importance, it was shipped to England by mail and was lost. There was also a third fighter, the Defiant, but it was slow, awkward and vulnerable, and its failings were comparable to those of the Luftwaffe Me-110. Britain also had an aircraft bombing capability, but the limited attacks on the troops and barges being assembled for invasion in French Channel ports were largely ineffective.

Goering and his staff thought it would be relatively easy to start the battle by closing off the Straits of Dover through which all convoys for London would pass and they allocated only two flying corps for that purpose. In preparation for the German attack, the RAF assigned Group 11 from Northolt station at London to defend the south coast including the Straits of Dover and along the Thames to London. Group 12, based near Nottingham, was assigned the area north of the Thames up to Yorkshire with both groups having about 640 Hurricanes and Spitfires. Opposing them in France, the Germans had 929 fighters and 1,191 bombers with Air Fleets 2 and 3. Dowding knew that the RAF would have to fight its way pass the German fighter escorts to get to the bombers, and he predicted, "Our young men will have to shoot down their young men at a rate of five to one" to beat the Germans.

In early July German aircraft began their attacks on British ships in the Channel, and on July 4 eighty-seven dive bombers escorted by fighters had ineffectively bombed the naval facilities at Portland. The first real fight occurred over the channel near Dover on July 10 while Adolf Hitler was still talking about peace. Six Hurricanes were spotted escorting a convoy and the German fighters scrambled. As soon as British radar picked up seventy planes on their way from the Calais area, four RAF squadrons were ordered to attack the enemy and "a magnificent dogfight" took place. The Luftwaffe lost four fighters and the Britons lost three. The RAF was pleased that their aircraft had joined up effectively from different sectors and the Germans felt they had successfully drawn out the enemy for battle. Both the attackers and the defenders considered the initial major encounter to have been entirely satisfactory.

During the probing stages of the aerial conflict, the relatively inexperienced British pilots had been apprehensive and unsure going up against the Luftwaffe pilots who were cocky and confident. Having learned in combat how to stay alive, the Germans knew such tricks as keeping the sun behind them to prevent being detected until they were ready to attack the enemy. When patrolling they flew in loose formations at different elevations which gave them greater maneuverability, freedom of operation, and better visibility, yet with good protection from their wingmates. Not having experience with established techniques of operations, the RAF lost fifty fighters within the first ten days of combat and, although the British had destroyed ninety-two of the enemy's aircraft, only twenty-eight had been fighters. On July 20 six RAF pilots were lost while others were shot down and had to be rescued at sea. It was not an optimistic beginning for the RAF.

By the end of July the British had learned that the Germans were rushing their preparation for the invasion and had already moved fifteen divisions of assault troops into ports opposite England. At the same time, RAF leaders knew that time and weather would be their allies if they could seriously contest the Luftwaffe control of the air over Britain. They also realized that only the first phase of the battle had begun and the results were not encouraging. German attacks on convoys had become so numerous that the Admiralty ordered future convoys to pass through the Straits at night. Even so, the Luftwaffe spotted a large convoy by radar on August 7 and attacked it with several waves of escorted

dive-bombers sinking 70,000 tons of shipping. In the period from July 3 to August 11, the RAF lost 203 fighters and the Germans lost 364 fighters and bombers. Knowing that he could afford to lose more planes than could the enemy, Goering believed his tactic of drawing out and destroying the RAF was succeeding. However, the amazing and totally unexpected fact was that the British production of aircraft had practically kept up with the losses.

For Britain, the lack of adequately trained pilots was far more serious than the shortage of fighter planes. Through the most stringent conservation measures, and the addition of twenty percent of its flyers from other countries, plus transfers from the naval air fleet, there were 1,434 RAF pilots at the beginning of the battle. But, when losses averaged 120 per week, the total of available pilots was reduced to 840 within a month and training facilities could not keep up with losses. It was a highly critical period for Britain for, as the experienced pilots were lost, their green replacements became easier targets for the enemy. That meant the remaining flyers were required to increase their flights, fatigue increased, morale declined, and losses were higher. It appeared to be a critical no-win situation.

For their enemy, the supply of pilots was more than adequate. German losses during the continental campaigns had been replaced and flying schools were turning out 800 new flyers per month. But morale rapidly fell as fighters were used largely to escort bombers which denied the fighter pilots the challenge and excitement of free aerial combat with the enemy. In fact, many fighter pilots had been relegated to the boredom of flying bombers. At the same time, Goering had begun to complain that the fighter forces were not being aggressive and blamed them for the failure of the Luftwaffe to quickly get the best of the RAF. Meanwhile, his fighter pilots were also required to escort bombers to Britain for three to five sorties per day so that exhausted flyers had begun to lose many aircraft. Soon bomber losses had become so heavy and morale so low that the crews began to complain that poor planning was requiring huge sacrifices for small gains.

The Luftwaffe also committed one of their most critical errors by not planning bomber and continuous harassing attacks to destroy and keep the British coastal radar sector stations out of operation. Attacks were launched on five stations but none were seriously damaged and all were soon back in operation. It was a huge mistake which gave the British the continued operation of a vitally important early advance warning system. Thus they were enabled to anticipate

German attacks, to make the most efficient and cost-saving defensive tactics possible, and to extend the strength and life of a greatly weakened air force. Another serious mistake involved the German method of estimating the enemy fighter strength. Consistently inflated estimates of losses and underestimates of production resulted in a greatly exaggerated and much stronger adversary than the Luftwaffe had expected. The resistance became increasingly stronger and heavy losses came from inadequate escorts. While their pilots were told the enemy was being rapidly destroyed, they consistently encountered more defenders than they were prepared to meet. Estimates of enemy losses were so high that they exceeded the estimated total number of RAF aircraft, yet British skies continued to be full of RAF aircraft. As Britain's strong defense continued to inflict substantial losses on the Luftwaffe, enemy morale declined while British morale was lifted.

Another serious miscalculation involved the Luftwaffe practice of listing a British air base as eliminated once it had been bombed. The facts were that out of the first eleven airfields listed as "permanently destroyed," only one could not be used for any lengthy period. The German photo-reconnaissance was not only poor, the Germans also overstated the results of their bombing, just as they had exaggerated the destruction of British fighters. Airfields and other targets were attacked which were not relevant to the battle, and the Germans continued to be inexcusably unaware that British operation centers were above ground at sector stations which could have been easily destroyed. The fact that the Luftwaffe also failed to follow-up the success of their attacks on the sector stations in August was one of the crucial blunders of the Battle of Britain.

The Germans should have been aware that weather conditions would often be unfavorable for operations over Britain and that usually the British would have the advantage of knowing about those conditions before their enemy. The Germans also failed to take advantage of their decipher of British weather reports and their operations were often frustrated or complicated by unexpected conditions and poor visibility. Such circumstances would delay or confuse the aerial assembly of bombers and fighter escorts before an attack and many of their crews were not adept at "blind flying." Considering the short range of their aircraft and fuel limitations, many planes tended to join the nearest formation which resulted in greater operational confusion and losses. The Germans also had to overcome the substantial anti-aircraft defenses the British had the

foresight to install before the war began. But as the great air battle approached, there were in place 1,328 heavy and 763 light anti-aircraft guns which were only half the number scheduled in pre-war planning. They did manage to install the target number of 4,000 searchlights and the innovation of barrage balloons, which were anchored by steel cables up to 5,000 feet in height. Such defensive measures were helpful in obstructing low-level bombing and reducing the strafing of airfields and other facilities. Indeed, the splendid ground organization throughout Britain mostly manned by volunteers involving detection, fire fighting and life-saving greatly aided effective resistance.

Yet another most important defensive development for the RAF resulted from the information gained from the ULTRA interceptions which often alerted Fighter Command regarding enemy offensive operations. Equally important were the volunteer Observer Corps which covered every part of Britain and provided the central plotting room with radar supplementary information that spotted and tracked the course of every aircraft in British skies. By means of their excellent radar, radio communication and observer system, the RAF commanders could follow enemy aircraft from their take-off in France, and to manage and control the defense and counterattack, so as to gain the greatest possible defensive advantage from their limited aircraft and aircrews.

On August 1 Hitler and Goering decided the time had come to launch Phase Two of the Luftwaffe offensive. War Directive 17 directed the destruction of airfields, aircraft, factories, and other facilities "necessary for the final conquest of England," after which the ports on the south coast would be bombed except in the invasion areas. August 13 was set as "Eagle Day" for carrying out Hitler's order to "destroy the enemy air force as soon as possible." Goering announced to the Luftwaffe: "I have told the Fuehrer that the RAF will be destroyed in time for SEA LION to be launched by September 15, when our German soldiers will land on British soil." With typical swagger and overconfidence, he believed he needed only four days to take control of the skies over Britain as he launched the first major bombing attacks on coastal fighter bases and radar installations. But thick clouds over southern England caused confusion, the attacks were scattered and some were wasted. The Luftwaffe flew 1,485 sorties to only 500 for the RAF.

The Germans were overjoyed with the results. Their pilots claimed to have shot down eighty-eight planes with a loss of only twelve. Crews reported

successful strikes against airfields, factories, the port of Southampton, and the destruction of many aircraft on the ground. They did not know that the correct losses were forty-four for the Luftwaffe and only thirteen for the RAF. Nor were the bombing damages significant with only three forward airfields seriously damaged, one radar sector station knocked out, and several others temporarily interrupted. As another result of faulty intelligence, part of the raids were uselessly directed at non-fighter bases and there had been poor coordination between bombers and their fighter escorts. The radar sector stations were attacked again a few days later, but within hours were back in operation. Then Goering made perhaps his biggest goof of the war by informing his commanders that since none of the radar stations had been put out of action, any further attacks would be of questionable value.

The following day weather restricted the number of sorties to about 50, but by the third day the strike was the most massive attack of the Battle of Britain. The Luftwaffe flew 1,786 sorties involving over 500 bombers against the RAF and its facilities. The first attacks against airfields at Hawkinge and Lympe resulted in little damage to one and the other was back in operation in two days. Later, a hundred bombers in two formations attacked bases at Newcastle and in Yorkshire. One formation with sixty-five bombers and thirty-five fighters met strong protection from the RAF and little destruction followed. The RAF had not lost a single aircraft and they shot down fifteen enemy planes. Another formation of fifty bombers did manage to get pass three squadrons of Hurricanes and Spitfires and succeeded in considerable damage at the Driffield base at a cost of ten bombers.

In other areas the RAF was not as successful in holding back repeated and stronger waves of enemy attacks. There was so much activity that the radar system, radio communications and the process for spotting and plotting enemy aircraft were all overwhelmed. The resultant confusion sent squadrons up to battle either at the wrong place or at the wrong time. Twenty-four enemy planes got through and destroyed much of the fighter base in Suffolk, and thirty-four bombers with strong fighter escort forced their way through to Rochester and seriously damaged an aircraft factory. Later in the day, about 200 planes flew over to bomb airfields in the south-central area, but early radar warnings provided adequate time for the defenders to assemble a strong protective force of fourteen

squadrons totaling 170 fighters. It was the most decisive day for the RAF in the desperate struggle. The courageous airmen of Britain, by their valiant sacrifices, had deflected the massive and unrelenting attacks so that relatively little damage was accomplished by the Luftwaffe's greatest effort. Throughout the day, the British while losing thirty-four fighters, had destroyed seventy-five German aircraft. Since most of the German losses had been fighters, there were fewer escort planes available for Luftwaffe bombers. And, as losses continued to increase, the Luftwaffe concluded that the dive-bomber and the Me-110 were not meeting expectations to win the air over England, and they were withdrawn.

None of these developments worried Herman Goering for German reports of victories in the air were grossly inaccurate. He erroneously believed that the Luftwaffe had been highly successful and that the Britons could no longer seriously interfere with the bomber offense. His count indicated the opposition had been reduced to less than 150 front-line fighters. But the truth was that Britain still had 750 fighters! The RAF crews, however, were almost totally exhausted. How much longer could they hold out against the incessant and overwhelming German assaults? The casualties had been horrendous. The loss of pilots had vitally crippled the ability of the RAF to maintain itself as an effective defense. There was no reason to believe that the German onslought would not continue far beyond the last resources of the exhausted few. It was a fact that the persistence of the overwhelming German attacks had practically destroyed the resistance and the morale of Fighter Command. As Squadron Leader E. M. Donaldson had become convinced the battle had been lost, he said, "I was fantastically tired and utterly depressed. My squadron had been in heavy fighting since May without a break," and he had "a very depleted and thoroughly beaten fighting unit." They knew that there was little more they could do—but the worst was yet to come.

With the RAF almost completely crippled, it had no way of knowing that it had succeeded in frustrating the timetable for SEA LION. The Luftwaffe had failed to eliminate the RAF from the skies over Britain nor had it succeeded in destroying Britain's resistance. Whenever Goering would inform Hitler that the RAF had been defeated, swarms of Hurricanes and Spitfires that no longer existed, would suddenly appear to shoot down more German fighters and bombers. Hitler was furious because his timetable for the invasion of Britain was

being delayed. He wanted to know how it was possible? Had not the Luftwaffe destroyed most of the British planes? Where were the fighters coming from? How was it possible that the mightiest air force in the world could not destroy such a small and defeated enemy? Goering became so furious with his commanders and his pilots that he accused them of incompetence and cowardice.

In the meantime, the build-up for Operation SEA LION had continued. More than 260,000 troops were assembled with 30-40,000 vehicles, 600 to 700 tanks, 6,500 horses, 500 howitzers, 50 anti-aircraft batteries, rocket-projectors, specialized artillery, landing gear and supporting weapons. To transport the invasion armada there were masses of all kinds of vessels including 168 transports of 700,000 tons, 1,910 barges, 419 tugs and trawlers and 1,600 motor-boats, as well as a large number of transport aircraft for substantial airborne forces. The final invasion plan called for units from Holland and Belgium to land between Folkstone and New Romney, troops from the Calais area to go ashore between Camber and Eastbourne, and the third wave from Le Havre would assault the beaches from Beachy Head to Brighton. After the follow-up forces from Cherbourg had landed at Dorset, mobile forces would move quickly against the expected limited opposition. Then the German occupation of Britain would be rapidly completed.

In good weather on August 24 the second offensive to clear the skies over England was launched. By radio interception the Luftwaffe had now learned the importance of the sector stations, and belatedly realized that in order to win the battle, the radar and communication system of Fighter Command would have to be destroyed. Increased fighter escorts were laid on as screens to prevent British fighters from getting through to their bombers. Other large formations were scattered to confuse radar as to their objectives, enemy radio communications were jammed, and many German planes were getting past an almost completely exhausted RAF. More Luftwaffe fighters and bombers constantly swarmed over the sector stations in the London area and seriously damaged the installations at Ramsgate, North Weald and Hornchurch. The bases at Biggin Hill and Luton were also seriously damaged and Manston was so badly hit that it was permanently abandoned. It was painfully obvious that the new tactics of the Luffwaffe were having a deadly effect and the situation became so bad that Air Chief Marshal

Dowding had prayed, "What we need now is a miracle." Then, at Britain's most desperate hour, an amazing miracle intervened with awesome consequences.

Hitler had consistently refused to permit the Luftwaffe to bomb London, and not for fear of retaliation against Berlin, which Goering had promised the Luftwaffe could prevent. The Fuehrer had already demonstrated that he had no objections whatever to the bombing of civilian centers, but most likely, he hesitated to incur international wrath when he believed that victory over Britain was near. Secretly some Britons, reportedly including Winston Churchill, hoped the Germans would divert their attacks on London which might save the final destruction of Fighter Command. On the night of August 24 masses of German bombers covered Britain from Kent to Scotland. As one group attacked its targets at Rochester, Kingston and Thameshaven near London, two planes became separated during the bombing-run and soon found themselves beyond their target. Not knowing they were lost over London, and finding themselves caught in a heavy anti-aircraft barrage, they quickly got rid of their bombs and headed for home. Fate had determined that it would be the first bombing of London since World War I, and the British outrage was furious and immediate. The very next night eighty bombers were dispatched on the first British raid on Berlin and Churchill ordered the RAF to continue the attacks until the reaction of the German people could be obtained. As so often occurs, once again it appeared that the most influential and catastrophic act of a battle had been determined by mere chance.

But the situation over Britain continued to look very bad for the RAF. The results of the aerial combat during the last days of August showed that the enemy was successfully wearing the RAF down. On August 31, the Luftwaffe swarmed in wave after wave all day long over southeast England dropping 4,400 tons of bombs with considerable damage and casualties. Fighter Command suffered its worst day of the battle losing thirty-nine planes and fourteen pilots, and it was the first day in which the RAF lost more planes than the Luftwaffe. The enemy had begun to force its way to its targets and Fighter Command could not long afford to trade losses with the Luftwaffe. While the Germans had no way of knowing it, they had now succeeded in gaining superiority over the RAF. Fighter Command had lost 200 planes more than had been received and there had been 231 pilot casualties. In other words, the RAF had been "badly mauled" and its

morale was at its lowest point of the struggle. It looked as if Goering's Phase Two campaign would be successful and conditions had become so desperate for the RAF that plans were being made to pull its forward bases back beyond the range of the Me-109s.

Most fortunately for Britain, the Germans were not aware of the true situation. Goering confidently believed he was near success with his mission to destroy Britain's capability to interfere with the invasion of the Wehrmacht. He knew that the British pilots and crews had been "strained to the breaking point" and that their defensive effectiveness against the Luftwaffe was declining. Their records indicated that in less than two weeks between August 24 and September 6, 295 enemy fighters had been shot down and 171 badly damaged, and that while the "courageous desperation" of the RAF had brought down 100 of his bombers, the Luftwaffe had lost only half as many fighters as had the RAF. He did not admit, however, that his Luftwaffe was also in serious trouble. Luftflotte 2 had lost more than 800 aircraft and had been reduced to less than 450 bombers and 530 Me-109 fighters. Unknown to the British, the increasing demands on the declining strength of the German fighters had begun to restrict the size of the bomber attacks. The August days of 1,500 sorties would never be matched again and the maximum number of sorties per day would be considerably reduced for the remainder of the conflict.

The Nazi dictator raged violently over the British raids on Berlin and threatened to retaliate against London if the attacks continued. The British ignored his threats and on September 3, Hitler ordered Goering to stop bombing other targets in England, including the vitally important sector stations and aircraft factories, and to concentrate the might of the Luftwaffe on the destruction of London. Providentially, just at the point when another big strike against the sector stations could have broken down the entire RAF defense system, Hitler's uncontrollable vengeance led him to completely reverse everything that had been obtained by the Luftwaffe at a heavy cost and with much sacrifice—and at the very moment he was about to obtain another spectacular victory which would have been his most important achievement—he turned the battle into what would become the most influential turning point for the West in World War II.

Air Marshal Kesselring later claimed that Hitler was convinced the RAF had been defeated and the attacks on London would drive Britain to ask for peace

with Germany. But Marshal Sperrle and the Luftwaffe Intelligence had contended, correctly at the time, that the sector stations were almost knocked out which would result in certain victory. Again as at Versailles, an emotional attitude of vengeance would win out over rational and objective considerations. Unquestionably, the most disastrous mistake of the battle was committed at the most critical point, just when the RAF was literally on the edge of defeat, the Luftwaffe had suddenly abandoned its attacks on the fighter bases and on the fighter production factories. Instead, its attacks were directed against central London in a foolish effort to terrorize the English people. The Fuehrer was in such a rage over the British bombing of Berlin that he literally wasted the power of the German air forces on vengeance, and in the process, threw away victory in the Battle of Britain. Unknown to either side, an incredible miracle had taken place. The exhausted and practically beaten RAF had been saved by the Nazi leader himself. Churchill's retaliation for the bombing of Britain would prove to be one of the most important decisions of the war which led Adolf Hitler to commit one of his greatest blunders of World War II. For the second time, Hitler had unintentionally saved Britain.

The biggest flap, and one of the most controversial events of the battle, occurred on September 7. In the only massive daylight raid on London new tactics enabled some 300 bombers with 648 fighters to get over the city in two waves with attacks on the docks and central London. Some of the RAF squadrons had been directed elsewhere, were late at the scene but still managed to bring down forty-one enemy planes to their loss of twenty-eight. Raging fires lit up the skies and served as beacons for continuing attacks which lasted throughout the night. The RAF had no effective night fighters and the only night-time defense had been the anti-aircraft guns which were largely ineffective. Believing the city to be in flames and finding that the opposition had been weak, Goering assumed that the RAF had been defeated and had challenged the Luftwaffe to literally obliterate London.

The British people had continued to greatly dread what they feared would be the terribly devastating onslaught of the Nazi invasion of their "beleagured Isles." They knew the horror of the continuous raids of the "Blitz" were merely the awesome prelude to an even greater tragedy, and that the hated enemy was massing his forces for a vicious and deadly invasion at any moment. Large

numbers of landing barges were spotted along the channel coasts, heavy concentrations of invasion troops were being assembled and huge waves of German bombers continued to force their way past the exhausted RAF. They expected and prepared for, as best they could, the inevitable outcome knowing that as soon as London had been largely destroyed by bombs and fire, the final and decisive phase of the desperate showdown must be faced.

During this time, the transport and assembly of invasion barges in ports between Ostend and Le Havre had continued, more bombers were being transferred from Norway to French landing fields, the tides were favorable, and it was widely feared that the heavy aerial bombardments would be followed by airborne landings. In fact on September 7, after a day-long bunker meeting while London was covered with flames, Britain's high command issued the codeword CROMWELL indicating that the invasion was imminent. Church bells sounded the alarm, everyone knew his duty and all posts were manned. Roadblocks were set-up, bridges were blown, minefields were laid, and alerts were issued for the expected paratroopers and gliders that would mark the beginning of an invasion. But they never did occur. Even so, there was hardly anyone who did not believe that British "pluck" would somehow get them through. In fact, when the author arrived in Britain in December 1943, he was told by British friends that an invasion had been attempted, but a great storm had arisen which had thrown the invading Germans into the sea, and Britain was miraculously saved by an act of God! The truth was that although no troops had been spotted attempting to invade Britain, during August 1940 about forty German corpses were found washed up along the coasts of Isle of Wight and Cornwall which had led to the widespread belief that an invasion had been attempted. Later it was learned that a great storm had occurred while the Germans were practicing for the invasion and many soldiers had been drowned.

Another serious shortcoming in the defense of England occurred when the inability of RAF aircraft to operate at night became evident. Beginning on September 7 the unrelenting "Blitz" had pounded London mercilessly for seventy-six continuous nights (with one exception), and more than 13,000 tons of high explosives and 12,000 incendiary canisters were dropped on the English capital. Raging fires swept through the city and the destruction and loss of life was an unending nightmare. But once the enemy had begun to concentrate its full

fury upon London, the RAF finally had the opportunity to begin to recover from the long and uninterrupted stress of battle. Although the people of London had suddenly become the front line of defense, their valiant refusal to yield before the devastating Nazi attacks enabled the RAF to survive and to continue the heroic struggle.

When Hitler's deadline for a final decision on SEA LION approached, the Luftwaffe made an all-out effort to overcome the enemy by launching on September 15 the largest air battle the world had ever known. Now however, with the Germans concentrating their attacks on London, Fighter Command facilities had begun to recover and its tactics became more effective. The heavily massed and escorted daylight bombers were surprised at the number of attacking RAF fighters, and while most of the bombers got through to their targets, bombloads were scattered, results were questionable, and they had to fight their way back to France. A repeated attack occurred in the afternoon with the same outcome. Fighting desperately against overwhelming odds, an unexpectedly strong RAF obtained a great victory. Sixty German aircraft had been shot down while the RAF lost twenty-six fighters. No one knew it but it was the turning point in the Battle of Britain.

The Germans were stunned at the shocking and demoralizing outcome which forced Hitler on September 17 to postpone Operation SEA LION "until further notice." Shortly thereafter, he ordered that the invasion troops and shipping should be dispersed. Since Hitler and Goering continued to believe that if London could be destroyed Britain would be forced out of the war, the Luftwaffe attacks were continued, but they became increasingly weaker and less effective. Another large raid on London was attempted on September 27, but the RAF was waiting. Then the Hurricanes and Spitfires trapped the bombers before they reached their targets and the bombers returned to France. In the meantime, the Me-109 escorts had exhausted their fuel waiting over London and many crashed going back to their bases. It was one of Fighter Command's best days of the war and fifty-five planes were shot down including twenty-one bombers while losing only twenty-eight fighters.

Goering was completely shattered when his Luftwaffe ace Adolf Galland informed him that, in spite of heavy RAF losses, the enemy's fighters and efficiency had not been reduced. Since the beginning of the battle the Luftwaffe had

lost 1,600 planes and on September 30, they lost forty-seven more aircraft in a huge daylight attack while the British lost twenty fighters. The German High Command could not understand how the British had survived nor how they remained as strong as ever in the face of such huge reported losses. Furthermore, daylight bombing had become increasingly costly and the Luftwaffe was forced to restrict operations to night attacks. Yet, unfortunately for the British, there had been a number of critical oversights: their otherwise splendid radar chain could no longer detect German planes once they had passed inland beyond the coastal network; the RAF fighters had not been equipped with radar; there were no specialized nightfighters; and the anti-aircraft and other defensive measures were not particularly effective. Fortunately for the Luftwaffe, a radio-beam guidance system had been developed which greatly increased their night-flying efficiency. Consequently, the battle advantage began to turn back towards the Germans.

By October 12 it was apparent to Hitler that the Battle of Britain had not been won and the invasion of Britain was rescheduled "for the Spring of 1941." The Luftwaffe Reichsmarshal, however, refused to concede defeat and continued his night attacks against cities, ports and industrial centers. He refused to believe that his mighty Luftwaffe was not winning the battle and night raids were increased for many parts of Britain. Also London, Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Bristol, and even Glasgow, were repeatedly bombed with considerable success. On November 14 ULTRA had warned Churchill and the RAF in advance of the Luftwaffe attack on Coventry, and it was said that to prevent the enemy from knowing their code had been broken, they were forced to permit Coventry to be destroyed. John Keegan, however, says that was not the case, that actually there was not time to take adequate defensive actions. While it turned out that the many war factories of Coventry made it a legitimate target, the massive attack against civilian targets aroused the anger of Britain and much of the world more than any other German raid. Over 50,000 structures were destroyed or damaged and there was a substantial loss of life.

The Nazi leader's constant and emotional interference with Luftwaffe operations was another costly German blunder. His sudden and revengeful decision to destroy London on September 7 caused Germany to lose the air battle over Britain and the postponement of the German invasion. The real status of the

struggle had not been apparent to either side at the time and, considering the totally inadequate state of Britain's general military condition, both Goering and Hitler continued to believe that their air raids would still force Britain out of the war. Thus the daylight attacks were continued and even the Italian Air Force attacked the Harwich and Ramesgate bases, but with little damage. Finally, as it became evident to the Germans that the battle had not been won, the attacks were made less frequently with decreasing numbers of aircraft. Only then could the RAF begin to realize that the battle was being won, that the invasion had been held off, and that Great Britain had not only survived, but would be able to continue the fight against the dreaded Nazi conquest. Although intermittent bombings would continue, British historians would later establish October 31 as the date when the Battle of Britain had actually ended.

Just after Christmas 1940, one of the worst raids of the war caught both London and the RAF in a "holiday mood" and caused great damage to the center of the city. 244 bombers releasing incendiaries as well as bombs, caused fires to spread rapidly and, with water low in the Thames from a drought, the city was almost destroyed by fire and hundreds of landmarks and churches were lost. But instead of helping to end the battle, such terror tactics made the English all the more furious and, under Winston Churchill's inspiring leadership, more determined than ever to "never surrender.".

Gradually, the winter weather of early 1941 brought about a letup in the German attacks and the British people managed to somewhat revive themselves. Once the public had time to realize how terrible the struggle had been and how exhausted they were, Churchill had to remind them to remain prepared for the invasion which was still expected. They had learned from the German intercepts that while the invasion had been postponed, no end to the difficult sacrifices was in sight and that the British "stiff upper lip" would continue to be necessary. As expected, when the weather improved heavy raids were resumed and Portsmouth, Plymouth, Bristol and Cardiff were repeatedly attacked and Hull, Belfast, Glasgow, Liverpool and Nottingham were also bombed. On March 19, London was struck with the heaviest raid of the war. While such raids continued to increase greater British fears of invasion, the Germans intended them to principally convince the Soviets of their sole preoccupation with the war in the West while they were preparing for the assault on the Soviet Union.

One huge final raid was planned before the Luftwaffe deployed for the new Eastern front. It was intended to convince the British that any increased aggression against the remaining Luftwaffe in the West would meet strong retaliation. Set for the first anniversary of the May 10, 1940 German attack on France, London was divided into three sectors to be bombed by separate groups of aircraft. Designed to destroy the center of London, 507 German planes dropped 708 tons of bombs, incendiaries and parachute mines resulting in the worst damage yet inflicted and every section of the city was caught up in raging fires. By this time, fortunately, the British had an effective night fighter equipped with improved radar. They had also learned to read the German radio direction beams which greatly improved their defensive tactics, and they were sometimes able to switch and misdirect an attack. Still only seven planes were brought down while a powerful and devastating assault struck London. Once again the equipment, the manpower, and the water was hopelessly inadequate to fight more than 2,200 fires covering some 700 acres, an area said to be larger than the Great Fire of London in 1666. The Parliament, Westminister Abbey, the Tower of London, the British Museum and Big Ben had been hit. The attack damaged or destroyed many more of the outstanding structures in London while 1,436 people were killed and 1,800 badly injured. Afterwards, much of London appeared to have been ruined and the public shock was almost too great to bear.

Then, suddenly and mercifully, two weeks passed without an attack. Was it the calm before the storm? The public continued to worry when the invasion would come? When a German airborne attack had successfully taken Crete from the Tommies, it was almost certain that Britain would be next. As many days went by without bombings, everyone wondered what the Germans were up to? Next, Goering announced at Paris that the bombardment of Britain had been in preparation for the invasion which would soon begin, but it was obvious that he had been bluffing. Then suddenly and surprisingly on June 22, 1941, when the German Army and the Luftwaffe unleashed their massive attack on the Soviet Union., the British people believed that they had been saved by Providence and that, at least for awhile, the battle in the West was over. And soon, they began to boast that the "defeated" British had given the powerful and brutal Nazis their first defeat.

The war, of course, was far from over and Germany and Britain would continue the fight for almost four more years. But, at least, it was believed that Hitler would not invade soon, if at all, and the British began to take the offensive against Germany. Bombing attacks were increased, radar was perfected for newly equipped night raiders, and German navigational radar beams were interrupted. Meanwhile, Germany made the mistake of making little effort to develop and expand its fighter capabilities. The world had learned that the Germans could be successfully resisted and, most importantly, that Hitler, like Napoleon, had undertaken the task of conquering Russia's vast territory and huge manpower in what he believed would be a quick and easy conquest. After all, even little Finland had put up a good fight against the Soviets. But for Britain, she had been granted a new lease on life. And now, the Nazis would also have to defend themselves against whatever offensive measures Britain might undertake. Although Britain still stood alone in the West, as far as they were concerned and greatly to their relief, the situation had completely changed. Now they had earned the right to be a full participant to continue to influence the final outcome of the desperate struggle.

But important questions remained unanswered. Did the British really defeat the Germans? Had the RAF won the Battle of Britain against the Luftwaffe, or had the Germans defeated themselves? Perhaps it was a miracle, or was it pure luck? As stated earlier, the outcome of battle is determined as often by error and chance as by command and strength of force. As at Versailles, but in a more fortunate direction, the fate of both Britain and Germany, as well as for most of the world, was determined as much by vanity, vengeance and stupidity as by courage, sacrifice and reason. It is said that battle is the most uncertain pastime of man and that, so long as men have influence over their destiny, it will remain unpredictable and indeterminate. And rarely was it more true than in the Battle of Britain.

It has also been said that in battle nothing can be more disastrous than decisions which are based on the emotional uncertainties of anger, vanity, and vengeance. Clearly, Adolf Hitler's and the German people's rage for vengeance resulted in the formation of, and the ultimate barbarity of the Nazi Reich. In the Battle of Britain, for somewhat similar reasons, Germany redirected and wasted German airpower against London at the very moment when victory was most assured. It was little more than vanity and over-confidence which prevented the Luftwaffe from developing jet fighters and heavy bombers which would have

certainly won the battle, and perhaps the war as well. Unquestionably, the arrogant pride and ego of Herman Goering obstructed the planning and direction of effective operations which should have brought success to the strenuous efforts and the huge sacrifices of a superior Luftwaffe. Other major mistakes involved failures to understand the importance of the radar defensive network and the refusal to concentrate on the destruction of Fighter Command resources, as well as to have based such important operations on false and inaccurate information obtained by an inadequate and incompetent Luftwaffe intelligence.

The struggle would have been surely lost without the dedicated skills and the heroic sacrifices of the gallant RAF. It was the chin-up, unflappable English spirit, led by the dramatic and determined Winston Churchill who caused the right thing to be done at the right time when all else had failed. And finally, it may have been just sheer luck, or truly one of God's miracles, that the uneven battle against the greatest evil the world has ever known was won. Really, it had been David against Goliath and the Philistines!

The final statistics for the great struggle indicate how the overestimation of losses by both sides had great impact on strategy. The British had reported 2,698 German planes destroyed when the actual count was 1,733. The Germans tallied 3,058 British fighters shot down when the official number was 915. That meant that at the most crucial time of the battle, the British had three times more fighters than the Germans expected. While the numbers would be modest compared to the battles that would follow in World War II, the "Blitz" succeeded in destroying much of London. 13,000 people had been killed, 30,000 were seriously injured, and hundreds of thousands were made homeless. 402 English pilots were killed in addition to twenty-nine Poles, five Belgians, seven Czechs, three Canadians and three New Zealanders. By their valiant courage and selfless sacrifice they bought the time to preserve freedom for much of mankind, and ultimately for Britain, the United States and Russia to win the war against Nazi Germany. As Winston Churchill eloquently put it, "Never was so much owed by so many to so few." Truly, it was "Their Finest Hour."

The significance of the battle was immensely historic. It not only saved Britain, it changed the whole course of the war. It gave the free world the time and a place to rally against the Nazis. Hitler was denied the mastery of Europe and probably the domination of the world as well. For the first time Germany's powerful military

forces were defeated. The Nazis had been forced to withdraw their aggressive violence against adversaries in the West and to redirect it against their enemy in the East in the dreaded two-front war that would once again stop Germany's march for conquest. The RAF had valiantly shown the world, and particularly the United States, that victory over the Nazis was possible and that Britain could be used as a base for the eventual defeat of Germany. It produced invaluable experience and progress in aircraft design and production, aerial tactics, radio and radar communications, development of defensive techniques, expansion of the bomber offensive, and greatly enlarged the unity and the determination of the British people. The belief that bombers could always get through was deflated, it disproved the myth that air power alone could win wars, and demonstrated that there was no independent role for air forces in warfare. Lastly, the future of freedom and democracy greatly benefited from the examples, as well as the consequences, of the incredible blunders committed by Adolf Hitler and Herman Goering.

It is apparent that Germany's first blunder leading to its failure to eliminate Great Britain as an enemy can be laid directly to the absence of a General Staff plan for the next contingency after a stunning victory. Most military men well know that no battle should be commenced without a contingency plan for action following either victory or defeat. Thus Hitler's failure to engage in the established procedure for a hot pursuit gave Britain the time to put together the leadership and the assets for defense when it was most critically needed. Germany's overemphasis on bombers and the low importance given to the design and production of fighters seriously limited the Luftwaffe's effectiveness throughout the war. Other major mistakes involved the absence of a reliable intelligence network to provide reliable and complete information, the failure to destroy or disrupt the British radar and radio network, the lack of priority targets, the waste of resources on non-essential objectives, and the emotional formulation and pursuit of policy which prevented a certain victory. The support of Goering's belief that bombing alone could win the battle was unfounded and it was a critical error to have produced the Me-109 with such a limited range and not to have provided it with escort wing-tanks earlier. Also, the failure to make greater use of their fleet of bombers based in Norway, the absence of any specialized landing craft, the lack of advance planning for the invasion of Britain, clearly indicated that the Nazi dictator had placed greater importance upon political opportunities than upon

military necessities. In general, the second most decisive battle in the West was lost due to the over-confidence and incompetence of the former Bohemian Corporal, the Nazi Army General Staff, and the bombastic Luftwaffe commander.

In strong contrast, British planning and tactics, especially under such unexpected and fatal circumstances, were both brilliant and successful. While the safe withdrawal of the RAF from France undoubtedly had been very damaging for the French, it proved to be critical for the survival of Britain. Their advances with the design and production of fighters and the pre-war completion of the defensive radar system with its radio communication facilities were nothing less than prophetical. Clearly, Dowding's battle tactics saved the RAF with his movements of fighters from base to base to confuse the enemy and to place them out of range. His policy of avoiding enemy fighters as much as possible and concentrating on the destruction of enemy bombers, was uniquely and dramatically effective. The brilliant strategy was not to win the battle—it was to save Great Britain to carry on the struggle for freedom against Nazism.

Finally, Hitler decided that the main reason that his enemy had continued to struggle on when all had been lost, yet had not given up the fight nor sought peace with Germany, could only be explained by Britain's desperate expectation that Russia would have no choice but to fight Germany. And there was nothing the Germans feared more than a two-front war which they believed had caused them to lose World War I. Consequently, since a defeated Britain and France no longer posed any threat of an attack from the West, Hitler believed it was his best opportunity to remove the Russian threat to his rear. Then there would be no two-front war, Germany would have the "lebensraum" and the oil and raw goods it required, and Britain would have no hope and no choice but to ask for peace. Otherwise, Britain would be easily destroyed later.

So the major importance of the Battle of Britain was that it prevented Germany from taking over all of Europe as well as Russia. Had Hitler won the struggle and eventually the remainder of Europe, he would have had the time and resources to have effectively fought against any long-range offensives by the United States in its capacity as the sole remaining adversary possessing the power to contest Nazi Germany's domination of the free world. In that case, a long and mutually disastrous struggle would have ensued which neither side would have won. However, since the United States would have been unable to deny Hitler

the continued subjugation of much of the world in any other way, the use of atomic bombs would have been inevitable. In that event, the consequences would have been too horrible to contemplate. But one thing is certain—there could have been no winner!

Many historians claim that Hitler's greatest blunder in World War II was his attack on the Soviet Union. However, this author concludes that is not the case. He knew that Stalin would attack his rear in the event he became involved in an extended engagement with the British, and the fact that the army of little Finland had practically fought the Russians to a standstill, had convinced him that the Soviets would be a pushover. Moreover, the British were no longer a threat and would still be there for the taking after the conquest of the Soviet Union. But as the consequences of World War II now indicate, Hitler's failure to win the Battle of Britain proved to be Germany's greatest blunder in World War II. It was an incredible and inexcusable series of mistakes and miscalculations, in the face of brilliant political and military victories on the continent, which prevented the defeat of the RAF, enabled Britain to stay in the war, and forced Germany into the dreaded two-front war which led to her eventual defeat. The fact is that Adolf Hitler's greatest blunder was that he not only lost the Battle of Britain, but World War II as well, by violating one of the most basic principles of victorious warfare—failure to pursue and destroy the defeated enemy! Both at Dunkirk and with Operation SEA LION, he refused to take actions which were within the power of his overwhelming resources and which would have, if employed, won the Battle of Britain and probably World War II as well.

In the final analysis, the extraordinary courage and skill of the RAF fighter pilots in their incomparable Spitfires and Hurricanes had obtained spectacular and legendary accomplishments. The indomitable spirit and courage of the 3,080 pilots of Fighter Command, against a vastly superior and more experienced enemy, literally turned the conflict from a desperate and almost hopeless struggle into one of the most dramatic and influential victories in military history. In fact, it can be truly said that the actual outcome of World War II was saved by the daring young men of the Royal Air Force, who wrote what has been widely acclaimed as, "the most brilliant pages in aviation history." Although their victory was greatly helped by the blunders of their enemy, unquestionably the superb performance of the RAF not only saved Britain, but also saved the final fate of the cause of freedom in World War II.

Chapter 5

The German Attack on Russia

The massive surprise attack on the Soviet Union by Nazi Germany on June 22, 1941 launched the mightiest and the most world-changing military struggle in the history of warfare. Since the Nazis in Germany and the Communists in the Soviet Union represented fanatically opposed revolutionary ideologies, it was inevitable that they would clash in a brutal and deadly struggle for domination. Thus millions of men with many thousands of planes and tanks became locked in a cataclysmic struggle which resulted in the death of more than thirty million people, with untold millions of wounded, and caused vast destruction and great suffering throughout Russia and in much of Europe. Moreover, the ferocious battle reached such gigantic proportions that the outcome was undetermined for four long years while the fate of the world hung in the balance. Tragically, it was mankind's most vicious and destructive conflict between two fanatic extremes of ideological dictatorship which would determine whether much of the world would become enslaved and liquidated by either Nazism or Communism.

At the end of World War I, Germany and Russia had much in common. They both believed they had been victimized by the capitalist democracies of the West, but in their weakened political and economic condition, they also feared military aggression particularly from each other. Above all, they shared the same hatred against the harsh treatment of the Versailles Treaty, and although they had fought each other in the war, their mutual resentments against Britain and France led them to improved relations of economic and military cooperation. Since the Germans needed help to bypass their Versailles limitations on rearmament, and the Soviets desperately needed industrial and economic development, each sought the help of the other. Oddly enough, the Soviets considered Hitler's verbal attacks against Communism to be little more than propaganda. In fact, the

German Social Democratic Party had actually asked Stalin to support the German Communist efforts to block the Nazi takeover of Germany which Stalin had ignored.

Eventually, it became "an alliance of evil" between two of history's greatest demagogues whose conflicting areas of influence were inevitably bound to clash. While England and France had been preoccupied with appeasement, Adolf Hitler's aggressive occupations were growing ever closer to the Soviet Union. In the meantime, Stalin found Hitler's encroachments increasingly threatening and he began to protect what he considered to be important Soviet political interests. William Taubman points out that from their takeover of Russia in 1917 to the beginning of World War II, the Soviet regime was constantly subjected to rebellion by the workers and peasants. Even Stalin admitted that the Western powers, who opposed Soviet Socialism, could have relatively easily deposed the Soviet regime during the 1920's and the 1930's. In fact, Stalin wondered why the "imperialists" had not finished off "the land of socialism?" Taubman emphasizes that Stalin's policy regarding the West from the beginning was to maintain Soviet security by the "divide and survive" principle taking advantage of conflicts and disunity among the democracies.

There was no excuse for Stalin, as well as for the West, not having been fully aware of the intentions of the Nazi Fuehrer. Hitler's public pronouncements had clearly put the world on notice about his ambitions for living space and raw goods for Germany which could be obtained only in the East by conquest. Having already chosen Poland as his next "peaceful" acquisition, and believing that England and France would back down as they had over the Rhineland, Austria and Czechoslovakia, Hitler became increasingly concerned about the Soviets. He knew that Stalin could not be expected to stand idly by while he placed German troops on the Soviet border by occupying all of Poland. He was also aware that he had to neutralize the Soviet Union before he could seize Poland. On March 23, 1933 he made his first move by publicly expressing his hope that Germany and the Soviet Union could "cultivate friendly relations." Marshal Stalin, worried about the possibility of war between Hitler and the West, and realizing Russia's vulnerability after his purge of the Red Army, as well as the instability of his Soviet regime, quickly informed Hitler that he had developed better relations with Italy in spite of his opposition to Fascism. Stalin knew, of

course, that continued good relations between Communism and Nazism was impossible, but Russia was in no condition to defend itself against the powerful German armed forces. Stalin also knew the threat and the danger, and that what he needed more than anything was time! Furthermore, according to author Vladimir Petrov, both Russia and Germany expected to benefit from any turmoil and upheaval for the "despicable democratic" governments of the West which they both intensely despised.

Soon a clever and insidious courtship of Adolf Hitler was undertaken by the Soviets and German representatives were informed that Stalin would be agreeable to a "cooperative arrangement" with Germany. In order to improve relations and to destroy the officer corps of the Red Army, Hitler provided Stalin with Gestapo evidence alleging that some of his generals would attempt to depose him claiming that Stalin had been an agent of the Czar's dreaded secret police. Since Stalin's reaction had included the execution or imprisonment of 35,000 Red Army officers, the charge must have been true. According to Russian historians, in April and May 1937 the best leadership of the Soviet military was massacred at the most critical point in Russian history. They contend that the "Great Purge" had caused widespread fear, disruption and disunity throughout Russia and that it had destroyed the defensive effectiveness of its military forces.

The Communist Marshal, being ideologically and politically distrustful of capitalist Britain and France, soon began to speak more critically of the West. On March 10, 1939 he revealed that the Soviet Union would not go to war with Germany for the benefit of Britain and France, and he assured Germany it could count on the understanding of the Soviet Union in its disputes with the West. According to Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov, it was that speech which served as the foundation for the Soviet-German pact. Stalin believed that by removing the chance of war between Russia and Germany, inevitably there would be a conflict between Germany and the West to Russia's advantage. After all, Communism was based on war and revolution against world capitalism. At the same time, fearing Nazi aggression, Stalin secretly submitted a proposal to the West for a six-nation conference to prevent armed aggression. However, Britain and France considered the Soviet Union to be a very questionable military power, were convinced that the "Bolshevik" regime could not be trusted, and believed

that the Soviets were "hated and feared" by their neighbors. Accordingly, the Soviets were advised that such a conference would be "premature."

At Berlin Hitler had secretly told his generals that Germany had to expand to the east and it had no choice but "to attack Poland at the first suitable opportunity." The French soon learned that the Germans were seeking a deal with the Soviets while the British government continued to believe that it could avoid war by making a deal with Germany. Moreover, Stalin believed the West was trying to exclude the Soviets from participation in European affairs. While tensions continued to increase, and the prospect of war appeared to be more likely, Stalin told the Communist Party Congress that they would not permit themselves "to be used as cannon fodder for the capitalist powers." While his negotiations continued with France and Britain, he continued to work one side against the other, and on May 17, 1939 he was advised by the Germans that since there was no conflict in their foreign policies, good relations should continue between Germany and the Soviet Union.

When the British learned of the new relations between Hitler and Stalin, they realized that in the absence of the threat of a Soviet attack upon Germany, there would be little that could be done to save Poland. Furthermore, Stalin accused the West of indecision and inaction and informed them that he would enter into an assistance pact with them guaranteeing neighboring states with specific aid provided his demands for Russian security were accepted. At the same time his negotiations with the Germans continued and he was informed that in the event of a war with Poland, in spite of German efforts to avoid it, there should be no misunderstanding because the interests of the Soviets would be fully taken into account. Also, that Russia's best interests would be served since the West would have little influence anyway with Germany separating them from Poland. Lastly, they said that a Soviet agreement with the West would make Russia an enemy of Germany while neutrality would not only keep them out of a war, but would also enable Germany to "accommodate" the most important interests of the Soviets..

Of course, Hitler knew about Russia's initiatives with the West and that the Allies had refused to accept Soviet demands in Poland, Rumania, the Baltics and Finland. He also probably knew that while those countries would welcome guarantees by Britain and France, they firmly refused any guarantee to Russia or to permit Soviet troops to cross their borders to meet a German attack. After all,

their past experience with Russia had cost them their freedom and they believed, if forced to choose, that their fate would be less severe under a Germany dominated by Hitler than it would be under the Communist Slavs of the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, the small largely undefended nations of East Europe were unmercifully caught between two armed and aggressive powers who would inevitably seek to destroy each other, and they rightly feared their freedom would be lost in the inevitable struggle between the two powerful aggressors. Much blame has been placed on the Poles charging that if they had agreed to admit Russian troops, Hitler would not have attacked Poland in 1939, and Britain is criticized for not having placed greater pressure on the Poles to accept the admission of Soviet troops against German aggression. But the Poles knew that if they had, their freedom would have been taken again by the Russians. Tragically, either way it appeared there was no chance that the freedom of Poland could survive. The poor Poles were doomed!

The British and the French were agreeable to the Soviet proposal to consider means of meeting Germany's aggression, but they could not accept Soviet intentions to protect its security by violating the rights of Finland and the Baltic states. Furthermore, it was apparent that the Soviets were playing Germany and the West against each other since it was known that the Germans feared Stalin would join up with the West against Germany and bring about the dreaded two-front war. That led Hitler to conclude he had to neutralize the Soviets which would prevent Britain and France from helping Poland, and surely would also deter them from entering the war. In any event, his panzers would finish-off Poland in a "quick" war before the West could take any effective actions against the Reich. However, based on their previous appeasement, the Fuehrer was convinced that Britain and France would not go to war, and especially not when there was little they could do to help Poland. That conclusion, however, proved to be Adolf Hitler's greatest blunder since it resulted in the most calamitous war that ever occurred.

Only two weeks before the planned attack on Poland, Hitler informed the Soviets that there were questions of mutual interest he wished to "discuss and clarify" which he was confident could be quickly resolved. Stalin, of course, understood Hitler's urgent needs and knew it would give him the opportunity to satisfy Russia's territorial ambitions which the British and the French had refused. He responded by informing the Germans, while his negotiations with

the West continued, that the Soviet Union wanted a non-aggression pact. Then Hitler, with his forces already prepared for the attack on Poland and convinced it would avoid the two-front war, quickly accepted Stalin's offer. So each of the dictators got what he wanted. The Fuehrer had prevented an anti-German alliance by Russia, France and Britain and he had just met his deadline for the attack on Poland on September 1, 1939. Stalin had not only avoided war with Germany and gained time to improve his defense of the Soviet Union, he also believed that the capitalist countries of Germany, France and Britain would exhaust themselves in war and reduce their resistance to Communism. Also, that Russia would regain much of the territory in the Baltics and Bessarabia which it had lost at the end of World War I and it would create a new buffer-zone between Russia and Germany. With the attack on Poland rapidly approaching, Hitler had been forced to accept every Stalin demand "unconditionally," and the Soviet dictator got everything he had sought from Britain and France as well.

At the last moment, the infamous Soviet-Nazi "Pact of Death" was signed August 23, 1939, only one week before Adolf Hitler launched his vicious surprise assault against the small and relatively undefended Polish nation. It was, undoubtedly, one of the most reprehensible and deceitful agreements ever executed since it shielded and advanced the barbarous intentions of history's greatest tyrants to impose by armed force their dictatorial ideologies upon their European neighbors and as much of the world as possible. Stalin later attempted to justify the pact saying he believed the Western powers would not fight so the Soviet Union gained one and a half years to strengthen its defenses. Russian historians claim that the Soviets attempted to delay the attack believing the West would have to join the fight for survival. After all, they said, the Soviets had done only what the West had done at Munich by buying time. Furthermore, they only had taken back what was taken from them in World War I.

Western historians, however, assert that Stalin ignored the fact that if Hitler had been faced with a two-front war with the West and the Soviet Union, he probably would not have attacked Poland. And even had he done so, Germany would have been defeated by the combined forces of Poland, the Soviet Union, Britain and France. Meanwhile, the anti-Hitler Germans could have overthrown the Nazis. Unquestionably, the unexpected alliance between Stalin and Hitler paralyzed the West into inaction and enabled the Nazis to separately conquer

Poland and to defeat France and Britain. Then, once the threat from the West was eliminated, Hitler was free to attack the Soviet Union. But the pact between the two evil dictators became the most disastrous blunder either of them could possibly commit. The Soviet Union was decimated by the most horrible suffering and destruction ever inflicted upon any country and resulted in the death of more than thirty million Russians. And Germany was not only ravaged by death and destruction, but was totally occupied and separated while East Germany was occupied by the Soviets for almost fifty years.

The record shows that Stalin's cooperation with Adolf Hitler arose from his hatred for the capitalist countries, his lust for the territory of his neighbors, and to buy time to oppose the inevitable Nazi assault against the Soviet Union. He had angrily attacked the "non-intervention" policies of the West charging there had been an "eagerness...to allow all the belligerents to sink deeply into the mire of war, to encourage them surreptitiously...to weaken and exhaust one another...and to dictate conditions to the enfeebled belligerents." Although his cooperation with Hitler had been initially beneficial, the pact turned out to have been disastrous for the Soviets. It created a false sense of security and deterred the Soviets from taking more effective defensive measures. It also eliminated the possibility of negotiations and agreements with the West for Poland, the Baltics no longer served as defensive barriers between Germany and Russia, and the Germans had occupied both Finland and Rumania. Lastly, when Hitler allowed the Soviets to rush forward and occupy their share of Poland, the Soviets became very vulnerable by leaving their well-established defensive system on the Russian border. Thus when the massive Nazi attack struck their lightly defended new positions afforded little resistance. The Soviets were totally unprepared and, according to Nikita Khruschev, "Even the Czar had more rifles in World War I."

It is argued that Stalin had little choice but to avoid war with Germany, at whatever cost, considering the poor state of defense in the Soviet Union and the questionable hold of the Soviets on the Russian people. His worst blunders involved the slaughter of the Red Army officers, the agrarian reform that brought starvation and death to millions of peasants, and the almost total lack of defensive measures which might, at least, have held the Germans up until countermeasures could be taken. On the other hand, it was claimed that the pact not only gave Stalin time to build up and arm the Soviet Union, but also to build a

new and younger officer corps which eventually saved Russia from defeat. Nonetheless, no excuse can offset the miserably inadequate initial defensive measures which led to the death of thirty million Russians and the vast suffering and destruction of the Soviet Union.

Suddenly on September 1, 1939 the world was shocked to learn that for the second time within two decades Germany had, without warning, assaulted her neighbor and had willingly brought about the nightmare of another war. Equally despicably, the Soviets had helped the Germans by providing radio beams to guide the German air assaults against the poor, almost helpless Poles. Then, after the Nazis panzers had rolled east across Poland against little or no resistance, Stalin collected his pay-off when the Soviets rushed forward and seized control of East Poland. The brutal power of the Nazi "blitzkrieg" had literally devastated the hopeless Polish defense within weeks and most of the world was appalled as the "two gangster dictators divided the corpse of Poland" between them. Stalin, undoubtedly, was shocked at the power and the brutality of the Nazi combined air and armored attack and, undoubtedly, considered himself very clever to have avoided involvement in war and, at the same time, having brought substantial territorial gains to the Soviets. So he made every effort to comply with the economic conditions of the pact and cautiously avoided any provocation which might bring about a Nazi attack on the Soviet Union.

The Soviets had known that Hitler planned to attack Poland and by their agreement with Hitler, they had cynically encouraged him to start a war being fully aware that Britain and France were pledged to help Poland. But Stalin outsmarted himself and committed his most fatal blunder which almost resulted in the complete destruction of the Soviet Union. He obviously believed that if he stayed out of a capitalist war which would likely result in great turmoil throughout Europe, Soviet power and Communism could become dominant on the continent. But as early as July 1940, the Fuehrer had decided that if he had any difficulty occupying Britain, a Soviet attack on his rear would be likely, so Germany would have to attack Russia. With 80-100 divisions in the east he would drive the Soviets far enough back into Russia so that they would be unable to bomb the Silesian industries and Berlin. Then, with no threat of an attack on his rear, he could easily overcome Great Britain.

After the Battle of France had eliminated Britain and France on the continent, Hitler was confident all threat from the West had been ended and that he could quickly destroy any Soviet threat to his domination of Europe. Furthermore, his pact with Russia having served its purpose, had no further usefulness and once the Soviets were finished off, it would be useless for the British to oppose him. At the same time, Stalin saw that there would be no more concessions from the conquering Fuehrer, so he moved quickly to takeover the Baltic States and Bessarabia to strengthen Russia's position. It was so obviously an attempt to seize an advantage while Hitler was preoccupied with Britain that it was described as "a fatal mistake of greed and bullishness." The Fuehrer was furious over the "crude" grab for power and when the mighty Red Army attacked little Finland, German diplomats at Moscow advised Hitler that the Soviets would avoid war with Germany no matter what happened. Then Hitler began to finalize his plans to attack the Soviet Union. As he told his generals on November 23, 1939, "We can oppose Russia only when we are free in the West." Although the Battle of Britain prevented a German invasion, there was no longer any danger of an offensive threat from the West. Therefore, Hitler decided that the Soviet threat had to be eliminated before Russia could increase its strength by seizing more territories.

In the senseless belief that Hitler would not violate their pact, Stalin soon began to press his demands and complaints. He attempted to get more concessions and tried to ingratiate himself with the Nazi leader by informing him that the British were offering the Soviets increased influence in the Balkans and the Bosporus Straits. Hitler was infuriated and became even more determined to eliminate Russia. The Soviet leader had committed one of his greatest blunders by permitting his aggressive greed for power to cause him to ignore the fact that ideological dictators usually do whatever they deem necessary to accomplish their goals. Even worse, he had ignored the fact that the German Nazi was just as devious and brutal as he was. Forgetting that one dictator is as devious as another, the Red Marshal mistakenly assumed he could continue to appease Hitler and to press his own aggressive demands. At the same time, he remained convinced that there was no immediate danger of an attack by the Nazis. Hitler, however, had decided it was time to begin his preparations to destroy the Soviets by convincing his top military officials that Russia planned to attack Germany.

The Fuehrer concerns increased as he worried that the Soviets with Hungary and Bulgaria might takeover Rumania's substantial oil resources. To prevent it, Hitler forced Rumania into agreements with Germany and Hungary which angered the Soviets. Germany next sought to send troops to Finland through Norway. Then unexpectedly Germany included Japan, with whom the Soviets were in conflict, in its Axis Pact with Italy. These actions infuriated Stalin and the Soviets and the Nazis accused each other of violating their pact. From that point relations between the two dictatorships went from bad to worse. By November 1940 the Nazis proposed a meeting between Germany, Russia, Italy and Japan to define "spheres of influence" to try to direct Stalin away from Europe. Again the Russian leader was ready to make another deal with the Nazis, but when the greedy Soviets demanded rights in Finland, Bulgaria, the Dardanelles and the oil fields of the Middle East, Hitler found that the "blackmail" had become repulsive..

As one author writes, "the great cold-blooded Nazi blackmailer had met his match, and the realization infuriated him." After having falsely claimed that Russia was preparing to attack Germany, Hitler demanded that a powerful surprise attack be launched which would destroy the Russian Army. On December 18, 1940 he directed the German Armed Forces to "crush Soviet Russia in a quick campaign before the end of the war against England." He called for a northern advance through the Baltic States to Leningrad, and a southern advance by way of White Russia which would later join forces to head-off and trap the bulk of the retreating Soviet forces. The attack on Moscow would not be released until the major Soviet forces had been surrounded and destroyed. A third force was directed south through the Ukraine to destroy Red Army units before they reached the Dnieper River. The final preparations were to be completed for Operation BARBAROSSA to take place on May 15, 1941. In spite of their well-established fear of another two-front war, not one German general protested Hitler's plan to launch what would likely become another disastrous world war. The timidity and inaction of the generals has been called the greatest example of cowardice and dereliction of duty to country and to mankind that was exhibited throughout all of World War II.

Just as the prospect of the conquest and submission of the Soviets seemed most certain, fate brought disastrous change to the Fuehrer's further plans for renewed aggression. Mussolini's Fascist troops had ill-advisedly attacked Greece.

But Winston Churchill, in fear of British troops being caught between Axis forces in Greece and North Africa, dispatched 60,000 troops for Greece which threatened Germany's position in the Balkans, and would place British bombers within range of the German's major source of oil in Rumania. Then in "probably the most catastrophic single decision of his career," according to Shirer, Hitler rushed German reinforcements into the Balkans to support the defeated Italians and to strengthen his southern flank for the attack on Russia, and "in a moment of convulsive rage, he lost his opportunity to win the war." The invasion of Russia had to be postponed and five weeks of the critically important best weather passed. Thus the assault on the Soviet Union would be forced into the same kind of terrible winter conditions which had destroyed and decimated the French forces during Napoleon's invasion of Russia By May 1941, it was common knowledge throughout Europe that the Germans were preparing for an attack on the Soviet Union. The world press reported that German troops were being massed on Soviet borders and Allied diplomats warned Stalin that an attack was imminent, but the Soviets not only denied all rumors by publicly asserting they were unfounded, they shot any Russian spreading such rumors. Of course, when Soviet officials complained to Germany about the rumors, they were denied and were reported to be British provocations. Neither Stalin nor the Soviets have ever been able to satisfactorily explain how it was possible for the Germans to have gained such a spectacularly successful surprise attack in the face of worldwide knowledge that the Germans not only would attack Russia, but would do so on June 22, 1941! Russian historians believe that Stalin committed the suicidal blunder due to his false and totally unrealistic conviction that Hitler would not violate their mutually beneficial agreement, and because Stalin would not admit that he, "the Master of Treachery," had been so disastrously deceived by the Nazi dictator.

It had long been believed in the West that war was inevitable between Russia and Germany. In the first place, it was obvious that Nazism and Communism were completely incompatible and that their pact had been a temporary "marriage de convenience." Particularly from the middle of 1940 on, innumerable notices were given to Russia that a German attack was imminent. They were informed that thousands of troop trains were massing German troops at the borders and they were given the actual location of enemy forces. Numerous changes

in the relationship between Germany and the Soviet Union had been observed and were reported to Moscow. Diplomats from various countries had informed their Russian counterparts of the coming attack and Soviet intelligence had confirmed troop build-ups. Even Russia's infamous spy, Richard Sorge in Germany's embassy at Tokyo, informed Moscow on May 12 that Germany had amassed 150 divisions on the Soviet border for an attack directed at Moscow. Three days later, Sorge named specifically June 22 for the attack and included details of Germany's military operational plans.

Germany's changing attitude towards the Soviet Union should have been apparent when Hitler's violent reaction to Russia's non-aggression pact with Yugoslavia resulted in his armed attack against the Yugoslavs. The Germans had also engaged in an aggressive series of incursions by land and by air into Soviet territories while obviously collecting information on defenses, armed forces and communication facilities. Incredibly, like the Belgians and the Dutch earlier, Stalin was so afraid of offending the Germans and risking conflict that Hitler was informed that Russian anti-aircraft and Russian planes had been ordered not to fire on German planes that violated Russian air space. In fact, from January 1941 until the beginning of hostilities, there were more than 152 known instances of over-flying by German planes and many had been forced to land with information confirming their plans for invasion.

On the eve of the "greatest and longest land battle" ever fought by mankind, the two largest armed forces ever assembled faced each other across a front of more than 2,000 miles. The German Wehrmacht, the mightiest military machine ever assembled, superbly organized and equipped with confident and successful leadership and troops, stood anxious to conquer the hated Soviet Bolsheviks in another spectacular victory for the Nazi Reich. Innocently relying upon their non-aggression pact with the Nazi Germans, and led to believe that all was well, the huge Red Army was completely unprepared, ill-equipped, largely undefended, and was led by young and inexperienced officers. Their tanks and aircraft were obsolete, the training of the troops had been inadequate, and they were highly vulnerable to a surprise attack.

The Communist "spin" to the Soviet's unpreparedness argued that Josef Stalin believed Hitler "would not dare" to violate his pact with Russia and that it was that belief which prevented Stalin from clearly seeing Hitler's aggressive nature

and plans. They also alleged that Stalin refused to admit that his relations with Hitler had changed and he continued to prefer to believe that England was trying to turn Germany and Russia against each other. Stalin was suspicious of any warnings coming from Britain or the United States, knowing their antagonistic attitude towards Communist Russia, and he believed they wanted Germany and Russia to destroy each other while they would "warm their hands by the fire." But Western observers pointed out that Stalin should have known there was no possibility of a detente between England and Nazi Germany and that the mutual interest between the West and the Soviet Union to stop Nazi aggressions should have been apparent.

Some of the Russian commanders had actually proposed preparations in the event of an attack and that their forces be moved nearer potential points of aggression, but were refused by Marshal Stalin. They were repeatedly ordered to do nothing which might provoke the Nazis. Even bridges were not mined and airplanes were left parked wing-to-wing on Soviet airfields. Instead of preparing for any eventuality, the Russian army remained under its normal peacetime routine. Still, some of the commanders on their own authority, made limited defensive troop redeployments several days before the attack and were reprimanded by Moscow. The official Soviet line consistently denied the rumors of war and said they were being spread by hostile powers while reporting that the Germans were "strictly complying" with the alliance. When a number of German defectors revealed there would be an attack along the entire front on June 22, they were generally ignored. The Red dictator obviously thought that he could continue to manipulate Hitler just as he later would successfully deceive Roosevelt and Churchill. All reports of aggression were believed to be provocations, no defensive measures were ordered, and no-counter measures were taken until the last minute when it was too late. By then, the Wehrmacht had seized the initiative and the opportunity for any effective defensive operations against the aggressors had been lost.

Early on June 22, 1941 the Nazis army charged across the frontiers in three massive onsloughts reaching from the Baltic Sea in the north to the Black Sea in the south. The strongest assault was concentrated with the central forces. There the armored blitzkrieg strikes immediately demolished the disorganized resistance of the Red Army and penetrated as deeply as sixty kilometers on the first

day. Most Soviet units had received no warning before they were suddenly and unexpectedly struck by German bombers and tanks. The massive invasion force consisted of 190 divisions, of which 153 were German including seventeen armored and thirteen motorized divisions, in addition to twenty-nine divisions and sixteen brigades from Germany's European allies. The total forces against the Soviets numbered 3,300,000 men fully armed with modern weapons including 7,200 artillery pieces, 3,350 tanks and 2,000 aircraft. In opposition, the Soviets had 170 poorly manned, equipped and defended divisions. Stalin's unjustified blunders had enabled the Germans to concentrate their strength opposite Russia's weakest defenses so that the panzers were able to rush the borders against ineffective resistance to quickly surround, capture or destroy the Soviets. It was a catastrophe of the greatest magnitude with hundreds of thousands of Russians killed and captured as most of the Red Army retreated. As Winston Churchill characterized it, "Stalin and his commissars showed themselves to be the most completely outwitted bunglers."

Another spectacular success for the powerful German military forces paralyzed and devastated the people of Russia. Not only had the Red Army been totally unprepared to take any effective defensive measures but the Russian people were completely unprepared to mentally cope with the disaster. They had been led to believe that the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany had established friendly relations, that there would be no war, and that the "invincible" Red Army was fully prepared to defend Russia. Meanwhile, the massive retreats and the huge desertions and defections of the Red Army were hidden from the Soviet people. They were told that strategic withdrawals had been made according to plan. Stalin, they said, was in command directing a strategy which would draw the Germans deeply into Russia where they would run out of supplies and could be surrounded and destroyed, as had been the case for Napoleon. The fact was that when the Nazis struck, Stalin was so shocked that he totally disappeared from public view leaving the Soviet Union without leadership in its greatest crisis. Alex de Jonge states that Stalin's pact with Hitler had been a "flight from reality," and that the reality had broken him. He also says, "It seemed inconceivable to Stalin," that the Russian people would "actually fight for their masters—rather than turn on them wholesale." Premier Nikita Khrushchev later reported that when the German invasion occurred, Stalin cried, "All Lenin created we have lost

forever." It required ten days for the dictator to finally pull himself together again. Then he spoke his first public words by radio and finally began to mobilize Soviet resistance.

Clearly, Adolf Hitler's attack on Russia was the most determinant event of World War II. At the time, it meant that Britain no longer stood alone and gave hope that eventually Nazi Germany would be defeated and the world would be saved from the horror of Nazi domination. When Winston Churchill learned of the attack, he attempted to set aside established attitudes against Communism and his personal dislike of Stalin's aggressive opportunism, and he rejected suggestions that the world would benefit from "a mutually destructive struggle between the Nazi and Communist Empires." At once he announced that although he had been a "consistent opponent of Communism" for twenty-five years and that he would "unsay no word that I have said about it," he was repelled like millions of people by the "brutal Nazi violence" which threatened humanity. Then, after conferring with President Franklin Roosevelt, the Prime Minister cabled Stalin that Britain would give all possible help in the fight against the common and dreaded enemy of Hitler's Nazism.

Stalin, however, was not too impressed with Churchill's offer of help and Robert Sherwood commented that from the beginning "even with its very life in peril the Soviet Government appeared to be more anxious to discuss future frontiers and spheres of influence than to negotiate for military supplies." Roosevelt reacted by sending Harry Hopkins as his personal emissary to Moscow who assured the Soviet dictator that the United States would "extend all possible aid to the Soviet Union at the earliest possible time." Stalin said his first need was for 20,000 anti-aircraft guns, heavy machine-guns, and one million rifles. The second priority was for aviation fuel, aluminum for aircraft construction, and a shopping list already presented to Washington. But even then, the Red Leader said, "Give us anti-aircraft guns and the aluminum and we can fight for three or four years." The Americans were taken by surprise to learn that the Soviets already had adequate supplies of tanks and anti-tank guns. The Soviet leader had easily won the full cooperation of Hopkins who returned from Moscow as a champion of the maximum support possible for the Soviet Union.

In the meantime, if Adolf Hitler had not made the critical blunder of not listening to his panzer generals, he would have won the battle and the Soviets

would have surely lost the war. The German High Command recommended that the Wehrmacht should employ the same tactics of deep armored blitskrieg thrusts towards Moscow which had proved so successful in Poland and in the West. But the "invincible" Nazi Fuehrer, always seeking a "quick victory," and in the belief he would avoid the mistake of Napoleon by driving Russia's forces intact to the east, ordered that the enemy would be surrounded and destroyed as soon as possible after crossing the borders. Accordingly, the invading forces were divided into three principal assault forces: Army Group North (Leeb) attacking from East Prussia was directed to attack through the Baltic States towards Leningrad; Army Group Center (Bock) to attack from the Warsaw area in the direction of Minsk and Smolensk following the Moscow highway; and Army Group South (Rundstedt) to attack between the Priper Marshes and Rumania towards the Dnieper River and Kiev.

Another critical error by Hitler involved his making a one hundred percent increase in the number of panzer divisions simply by withdrawing armored units from existing divisions. The fact was, however, that there had been an increase of only 800 tanks since the campaign in France. Furthermore, almost all of the motorized equipment was road-bound which would prove to be a disastrous circumstance in a country where roads were few, if not non-existent, and it meant that in mud or slush most of his troops would be immobilized. Another severe handicap proved to be the difficulty in maintaining the defense of German troops and the availability of supplies against the unrestricted all-weather maneuverability of the superb Soviet T-34 tank. Even in moderate weather conditions, and particularly if bridges were blown, the operation of traditional road-bound vehicles became a critical liability for the German army.

Nonetheless, within three weeks Bock's panzers and motorized units in the center had driven 450 miles to Smolensk with Moscow only 200 miles away. Group Leeb had moved quickly through the Baltics towards Leningrad, and Group Rundstedt was rapidly closing in on Kiev in the Ukraine. Again the world was astounded and terrified over the awesome might of the Nazis. The Red Army had been taken by surprise, annihilated, surrounded or dispersed, and quickly appeared to be defeated and in full retreat. Hitler was ecstatic and believed that Moscow and Leningrad would soon fall to his invincible Wehrmacht. But by mistakenly believing that his "quick" war had already defeated the Soviets, he

made the disastrous blunder of concluding that the war had been won, and that his forces could be "considerably reduced." Incredibly, no less than forty divisions were disbanded and sent back to Germany for industrial manpower.

By the latter part of July, however, in spite of disastrous retreats, the heavy loss of men and equipment, and the capture of hundreds of thousands of Soviet troops, Stalin and his Supreme Headquarters had recovered from their initial paralyzing shock. They soon managed to rally the Red Army in the "Great Patriotic War for Mother Russia," and the resistance to the Nazis began to become more effective. The Soviets had intentionally sacrificed masses of men against the Germans to gain time for supplies of guns, tanks and aircraft to be produced in the factories which had been moved eastwards. Within weeks the Germans began to show signs of weakness by criticizing their intelligence agency's estimate that there had been only 200 enemy divisions when 360 had been identified. General Gerd von Rundstedt said he had quickly learned that their information on Russia was "nonsense." The most damaging surprise, however, involved the Soviet T-34 tank whose armor, firepower and maneuverability surpassed that of any tank in World War II. The Wehrmacht was also shocked to learn that the Luftwaffe was too weak to fulfill its attack and defensive responsibilities to the ground forces. Furthermore, as General Ewald von Kleist later reported, the High Command had been led to believe that Stalin would be overthrown by non-Communist Russians as a result of the initial military defeat.

The power of the Wehrmacht was still overwhelming, however, and Panzer Leader Heinz Guderian knew that if the pressure was kept up, he could go all the way to Moscow with little interference. But then, "the greatest strategic blunder of the Eastern campaign" occurred, according to Chief of the General Staff Franz Halder, when Hitler intervened again and ordered the armored forces to leave Bock holding in the center while Guderian's panzers were to move south towards the Ukraine. Hoth's panzers were ordered north in the direction of Leningrad, and the Fuehrer directed that only after the enemy had been cleared in the Kiev area, could Guderian's panzers return so that Bock could once again move on Moscow. Hitler mistakenly believed that Moscow could be taken whenever he wished and that if he could take Kiev and Leningrad, then Russia would collapse and the war with Russia would be over.

When the assault on Leningrad stalled in the north, Bock held up his drive in the center for two months while Guderian drove across the Soviet's rear and Kleist's panzers struck northward. When the pincers were closed 150 miles beyond Kiev, 600,000 more Russians were trapped and the encirclement of Kiev became another brilliant victory for the Wehrmacht. With the return of his panzers at the end of September, Bock achieved another great encirclement around Vyasma in which another 600,000 Soviets were surrounded leaving Moscow practically unprotected. But, disastrously for Germany, by that time the end of October had come and the rains and mud unexpectedly arrived. Neither trucks nor tanks could move on Russia's unimproved roads, supplies could not get through, much equipment broke down over such long distances, and the German troops were totally exhausted. Suddenly, much earlier than usual the traditional Russian antagonist "General Winter" arrived and the German generals, knowing they were unprepared for winter, wanted to stop the offensive. The Fuehrer, however, believed Moscow was ready to crack and the offensive was resumed on November 15. But after several weeks of bitter struggle in the mud and snow, it was called off when the forward German units were only twenty miles short of the Soviet capital.

In the south by November 21, the tanks of Kleist had opened the "gateway to the Caucasus" by taking Rostov on the Don river. But the Soviets were now better organized and were fighting fiercely. Only five days later, they launched their first successful major counterattack on both the northern and southern flanks, Rostov was freed, and the Germans were forced into a fifty mile retreat at the Mius river. Later Guderian said, "Our misfortunes began with Rostov...that was the handwriting on the wall." It was the first major defeat of the war for the Nazi army. With the increase in the intensity of the struggle, by November 26 German casualties had reached 743,112 which was almost twenty-three percent of their 3.3 million total manpower. Although the winter weather had been a great factor, it was reported that the major change in the nature of the struggle had been due to the Red's "indomitable will not to give up," and by their fierce resistance against the Germans.

However, when the Germans had approached Moscow there was panic. The city was subjected to heavy bombing and shelling and the Soviets feared the enemy would soon be within the city. Josef Stalin even had a plane standing by

for his escape and a general evacuation was underway. On December 1 the Germans launched what the Soviets expected would be the final assault which would capture Moscow, not knowing that the enemy had committed his greatly weakened and limited resources, in a final desperate effort in which some elements had actually reached the suburbs of the city. At what appeared to be their darkest and most hopeless moment, a remarkable event would occur which undoubtedly saved the Soviet Union from capture and extinction.

The desperate fate of the Soviet Union was suddenly and dramatically changed when several almost miraculous events occurred at the most critical time. Most significantly, Soviet spy Richard Sorge informed Stalin that the Japanese would invade Southeast Asia and would not attack the Soviet Union's rear, which made it possible for large numbers of fresh and strong troops to be transferred to the Moscow front just in time to meet the final Nazis assault. Then just as the Germans were expecting to take Moscow on December 6, 100 Russian divisions trained and equipped for winter fighting suddenly struck the weakened Germans on a 200 mile front with such force that the Nazi forces could never really recover. Equally important, the providential intervention of the earliest and coldest weather in many years with temperatures as low as thirty-five degrees below zero had completely immobilized the unprepared and exhausted Wehrmacht. In addition, the timely appearance of wide-tracked and heavily armored T-34 tanks with masses of artillery and rockets provided a powerful counterattack by which the Soviets were able to demolish the German's disintegrating resistance. Even Adolf Hitler had helped to turn conditions around with his continued interventions imposing excessive demands on the German army based on an over-estimation of its abilities. And finally, the lowly Russian soldiers and peasants, whose allegiance Stalin initially feared, refused to give in to the enemy and continued to bear courageous sacrifices and untold suffering to save Mother Russia.

But even when the Soviets struck with every force they could muster, the Germans still put up such a desperate defense that the Battle of Moscow ended in a stalemate. However, at last the attackers had been stopped just before they entered the Soviet capital, and while they would continue to be a powerful threat, the German Army had suffered its first strategic defeat of World War II. In the two months that followed the Germans fought desperately as the

overwhelming Soviet manpower destroyed much of their remaining defensive power, but as the Soviets continued to gain the initiative, heavy German losses resulted and the Wehrmacht began its retreat. Then Hitler committed another disastrous blunder by relieving many of his generals as well as corps and divisional commanders. Henceforth, the accumulated blunders on each side would leave the outcome of the battle to a desperate struggle to decide whether Nazism or Communism would be destined to rule the world.

The vicious conflict between the world's most powerful military adversaries would not be decided until three historic battles had been fought: first, the Battle of Moscow in the fall and winter of 1941; second, the Battle of Stalingrad in the fall and winter of 1942; and third, the Battle of Kursk, in the summer of 1943. But the most important battle of the war in Europe occurred at Moscow. There the powerful blitzkrieg aggression finally exhausted itself, the belief in the invincibility of the Wehrmacht ended, and the Germans could no longer hope for another quick victory. Seweryn Bailer said, "in no other case did Soviet fortunes shift more miraculously from near disaster to victory." From that point on, Hanson Baldwin found that for Hitler it had become "a war of attrition, which he could not possibly win."

The first major blunder in the attack on Moscow itself was the inexcusable failure of German intelligence to detect or predict that the massive Soviet forces on the Japanese front might be committed. Then when the invaders were first struck by the unexpected severe weather, they planned to wait until spring to rest and regroup to renew the offensive. But the worst blunder by the German High Command involved their underestimation of the Soviet capability to launch such a powerful counteroffensive. They also remained inexplicably ignorant about the new resources and powerful tanks and weapons which the Russians had produced. As a consequence of such decisive mistakes, German casualties continued to escalate rapidly. In the struggle before Moscow from November 16 to December 5, the Germans lost 55,000 dead, over 100,000 from wounds and frost-bite, and more than 700 tanks. In the same period, the Soviets reported they had 230,000 killed and 720,000 wounded. But, the Germans over-estimated that 4,000,000 Russians were captured after 2,000,000 casualties, and that 18,000 tanks, 22,000 guns and 14,500 aircraft had been destroyed.

How could such sudden and disastrous developments have been possible for the invincible Germans? After the war German generals charged that Adolf Hitler most grievous blunder caused the loss of Moscow when he interfered and held up Bock's Center Group for two months while he diverted forces towards the Caucasus. Then when the Moscow offensive was resumed in October, early mud and snow immobilized the Germans and cut off their supplies. On the other hand, the Soviet official history ignores any mistakes by the Germans and contends that Bock had no choice but to take the defensive when suddenly confronted with the might of the Red Army. The weather had little to do with it, the Soviets say, placing full responsibility on the Germans for poor planning and preparation, as well as their inability to interfere with the Soviet massing of reserves behind Moscow before their critical and successful counterstroke. They accused the Germans of "seriously underestimating" the capabilities of the Soviet Army and of overestimating the capacity of the Wehrmacht to take Moscow. Finally, they correctly assert that it was the courage and the tenacity of the Russian military and people that finally brought victory.

But the Fuehrer's initial critical mistake had involved his dispatch of forces to the Balkans which delayed the attack on Russia until the end of summer leaving too little time to reach Moscow before the beginning of winter. Then he wasted another month arguing with his generals about changing the major assault away from Moscow towards the Crimea to obtain valuable industrial areas and Russian oil. And he became obsessed with the mistaken idea that the capture of both Leningrad and Stalingrad would cause the collapse of the Soviet Union. Finally and reluctantly, the Fuehrer agreed to the resumption of the attack on Moscow, but by that time it was October before the drive got underway again, and it was too late.

The Germans still could have won the battle had they not made the costly mistake of depending upon the wheeled transport of men, weapons and materiel instead of tracked vehicles over Russia's vast roadless distances. As Liddell Hart writes, Russia was saved more by its "primitiveness" than by the technical and industrial progress made since the Revolution. But, another of Germany's greatest blunders occurred on December 19 when Hitler fired many of his generals after the Battle of Moscow was lost, and named himself as Commander-in-Chief of the Army! That meant, of course, that Hitler had decided he could do better

in the war than the German generals. Unfortunately for the Wehrmacht, its tactics and strategy would be directed by an emotionally unstable former Corporal who was a politician, knew little about warfare, and was described as being "egotistical, revengeful and temperamental, if not unbalanced." According to James Stokesbury, that could have been the Soviet's greatest victory as it forced Hitler to takeover supreme command "where he was free to make mistakes." For the German army, it was the worst possible development for Hitler's continuing blunders would become the major factor in the disastrous defeat of the powerful Wehrmacht by a resurgent Soviet Army.

Hitler's first major command as the Supreme Commander was to forbid any further withdrawals. It was a highly controversial order which was considered to have been another critical mistake. Whether it avoided the complete collapse of the army or caused it to suffer heavy losses from which it never recovered, continues to be debated. Many divisions were overwhelmed and destroyed which might have been saved by a timely withdrawal. Conversely, it is argued that Hitler's command to "stand and fight" prevented the total disintegration of the Wehrmacht under extremely desperate conditions. One German general even claimed that it was the Fuehrer's "one great achievement."

The surprised Wehrmacht continued to be suddenly confronted by unlimited numbers of fresh troops as the Red Army's counteroffensive continued for three months, forcing the invaders to retreat as much as 200 miles before the Soviet drive ended on February 20, 1942. By then, the German losses had reached almost a third of their million men force with over 200,000 killed, three quarters of a million wounded, and 46,000 missing. In addition their Hungarian, Rumanian and Italian allies had also suffered substantial losses. Still, the Germans managed to hold on to their "fortified bastions" from which they emerged aggressively with the change of weather. Hitler's "stand and fight" policy did manage to restore much of the confidence of the invading forces which undoubtedly prevented their complete collapse. However, the Wehrmacht was unable to make any significant additions to its armor, aircraft, or manpower which became a decisive factor as the war continued. Moreover, Hitler's hasty and reckless declaration of war against the United States in its war with Japan was a huge mistake. It provided Germany with no benefit whatsoever, and to the contrary, not only brought the massive resources of the United States into the

war against Germany, but also produced a great boost to the morale and the determined resistance of the British and the Soviets.

By early 1942, Hitler had become convinced that Germany could not continue the war without acquiring the oil resources of the Soviet Caucasus region, and while the reality of the situation suggested either a withdrawal or a strong defensive stand, he believed Germany could only avoid defeat by regaining the offensive against the Soviets. Falsely assuming that Soviet manpower reserves had been depleted, and by the ridiculous method of splitting up his divisions so as to double their number, Hitler launched a new summer offensive that succeeded in clearing the Crimea, except for the fortress at Sevastopol, by the end of May. Then, after a Soviet counterstroke towards Karkov was bungled with the loss of two Russian armies and 241,000 prisoners, the confidence of the Germans was restored. Meanwhile, the panzers broke through between Kursk and Belgorod and rushed forward 100 miles to the Don river.

The 4th and 6th German Armies had also made good progress towards Stalingrad when Hitler surprisingly made another of his most fateful mistakes. Instead of taking Stalingrad, which was lightly defended, he split off the 4th Army to join the southern group's advance on the Caucasus. With reinforcements, the German right wing fought its way more than 250 miles to Rostov, but attrition and the shortage of fuel finally stalled its Caucasus drive in middle September before it reached Tiflis. By insisting on the simultaneous conquest of both Stalingrad and the Caucasus, Hitler had denied each operation the necessary strength for success which resulted only in disaster.

Von Paulus's Sixth Army, with the Caucasus armored advance protecting it's right flank, had driven between the Don and the Volga rivers making good progress for 350 miles until the advance of the southern group began to weaken. Then, as von Paulus neared the bend in the Don river near Stalingrad, Soviet resistance strengthened and it took almost a month before the Germans could cross the river. With a concentrated assault by the Sixth Army from the north, and the Fourth Panzer Army from the south, attempts to close a pincer movement at Stalingrad was suddenly stopped by masses of Soviet troops. Attack after attack against the Soviet defenses only resulted in huge losses and small gains. While the Soviets fought desperately and heroically from September to November to hold on to their rapidly decreasing perimeter against the constant

vicious assaults of the enemy, the brutal and desperate struggle indicated that both sides realized the importance of the battle's outcome.

Then the oncoming deadly approach of winter caused Hitler's generals to worry about the vulnerability of their over-extended lines. Again they asked to withdraw their forces for defensive purposes and again Hitler refused. The battle had now become a life or death struggle between Hitler and Stalin! For Stalin and the Soviets, it meant either freedom and expansion of Communism or slavery for Russia. For Hitler and the Germans, it meant either world conquest or the annihilation of the Third Reich. And each side was willing to expend its last resources to win the decisive conflict. Since the Germans could not cross the Volga to surround the city, the furious fight was finally concentrated into a small industrial area of Stalingrad next to the Volga. There amidst the great rubble of the city, the tanks of the Wehrmacht could not be used, and the Germans found themselves involved in a man-to-man struggle where the Soviets unlimited replacements gave them a decided advantage. Obviously, Hitler had made a fatal error by not by-passing Stalingrad as the German generals had advised. Instead, he foolishly forced the Sixth Army into "a set-piece battle of attrition" in which his men were greatly outnumbered and were mercilessly "ground up as in the trench warfare of World War I."

Still, the desperate and experienced German troops finally forced the Soviets back against the river into a small area of largely destroyed factories. Then once again on November 19 the Soviets were saved by their powerful ally "General Winter." Following an overwhelming attack, Soviet armor broke through the German flank held by the Rumanian Third Army northwest of Stalingrad, and yet another powerful Soviet attack successfully struck the German Fourth Army and the Rumanian Fourth Army south of Leningrad. When the attacking forces met at Kalach on November 23, twenty German and two Rumanian divisions had been trapped in Stalingrad. Although Manstein's Army Group Don was ordered to relieve the Sixth Army, when Hitler refused to permit von Paulus to fight his way out, Stalingrad's fate was sealed. Then, just as the German's relief efforts had committed the last of their armor, the Red Army released another massive attack on December 16, and in less than a week the Soviets had cleared the entire Don-Donetz corridor. Finally, Hitler realized that his long exposed

lines reaching 600 miles into the Caucasus threatened an even greater disaster and left him no choice but to take the defensive.

In spite of Hitler's command to fight to the last man, after five more weeks of hopeless struggle in sub-zero weather without relief, food or ammunition, von Paulus was forced to surrender the largely defenseless remnants of the Sixth Army on January 31, 1943, in Germany's "most humiliating and demoralizing defeat of the war." There had been more than 276,000 German casualties and 92,000 Germans were taken prisoner. To practically everyone except Adolf Hitler, it was the turning point at which it became probable that Germany would lose the war. Hitler, not unlike Napoleon, suffered from the conviction that he was invincible, and he had over-confidently attempted to conquer too much of Russia, only to be "swallowed up by the vast expansiveness of Russia and by its overwhelming masses of counterattacking manpower." By then, the Nazi forces on land and in the air had been so overwhelmed by the Soviets that they were capable only of largely delaying operations consisting of local counterattacks. Then, after 18 months of the largest and most brutal battle in history, it had become apparent that the eventual outcome of the struggle was no longer in doubt.

With the prospect of a great victory at Stalingrad, the confidence of Soviet military leadership had grown with the increasing power and success of the Red Army. In early 1943 attempts were made to cut-off the German 400 mile advance eastward into the Caucasus. Kleist's 17th Army withdrawal barely escaped being caught at Rostov, and new Russian advances forced the German armies to continue to withdraw. By February, the Soviets had gained a wide advance between Kursk and Orel, and attempted to cut-off the withdrawal of the Hitler's southern forces. But this time "General Weather" entered the struggle on the side of the Germans. An early thaw not only stopped the Russian advance, but left their over-extended lines dangerously exposed to a German counterattack. After being reinforced by the retreating Seventeenth Army, the Germans struck the Soviet over-extension with their full remaining forces and drove successfully to the Donetz River. But the drive lacked the strength to get across the river to surround the retreating Soviets.

After a year's desperate struggle with incredible sacrifices and losses by both sides, the battle was back approximately where it had been a year earlier. But important and decisive changes had occurred. Following Moscow, the Germans

had suffered another very important defeat. Most importantly for the Russians, they had obtained superiority in weapons and their soldiers now exceeded the Germans 4 to 1. During their greatest crisis, the Soviets had obtained large quantities of critical aid from the West mainly from the United States. In 1942 and 1943 more than 10,000 tanks had been received from America, Britain and Canada plus more than 18,000 airplanes from the United States and Great Britain. Eventually, a total of 385,000 trucks and huge supplies of clothing, food and raw materials were supplied along with other resources. That had enabled the Soviets to concentrate on their production of tanks and guns which eventually gave them superiority over the Germans. And in the summer of 1943, it was largely American aid that provided the vital means which finally destroyed all German hope of victory over the Soviets.

Several months after President Roosevelt's dramatic and emotional proclamation of the "unconditional surrender" policy at Casablanca, which he believed would prevent a separate peace between Germany and Russia, as well as to assure Stalin of Allied wartime solidarity with the Soviet Union, the Russians attempted to negotiate a separate peace with Germany. Stalin's Foreign Minister Molotov met secretly with the Germans at Kirovograd in June 1943 specifically to discuss conditions for peace. However, the Germans demanded a new Soviet border near their existing front at the Dnieper River, and the Soviets insisted on the restoration of their original frontiers. No agreement could be reached and, as soon as the Soviet's found out that news of the secret meeting had leaked to the West, the negotiations were quickly abandoned and the awesome struggle continued.

In July, while holding on other fronts, Hitler massed his remaining armor and attacked the Soviet bulge at Kursk. He had put together eighteen of his best remaining divisions with 3,000 tanks and attacked on a narrow thirty-mile front. In the meantime, in what had become a major tactic with the Soviets, they withdrew until the German momentum began to weaken, then they counterstruck with some 3,000 tanks. It was the largest tank battle in the history of military warfare. But the superiority of the T-34 was unsurpassed, the new tactics of massed Soviet guns and rockets were devastating, and the vulnerability of the German armor soon resulted in the literal death of the panzer armies. Never again would the blitzkrieg mobility of the dreaded armored offensives be a decisive battle factor. Most importantly, knowing they had at last achieved

superiority in both men and weapons, the Soviets had gained an offensive initiative and momentum which generally gave them the freedom to attack whenever and wherever they chose, until the final victory was won.

What had literally stopped the assault on Russia by the vaunted Wehrmacht was the massive Soviet counteroffensive that began at Moscow and reached its zenith at Stalingrad. Then, Germany's final offensive effectiveness was destroyed beyond recovery in the last mighty struggle at Kursk-Orel. As the Soviets had launched their relentlessly aggressive attacks from the south to Leningrad, the Germans were unable to defend such a long front and withdrew into the Crimea after evacuating Smolensk in the center. Although they had held off the enemy at great cost for a successful retreat behind the Dnieper, the Russians claimed that their advances during the summer of 1943 had cost the Germans 900,000 dead and 98,000 captured. The Germans, however, as they would on other fronts and in spite of little chance for victory, consistently demonstrated their remarkable defensive capabilities under the most disastrous circumstances. Even outnumbered 6-to-1, they desperately fought against their total annihilation from strong defensive "hedgehog" positions. If Hitler had abandoned his costly blunder of requiring the Wehrmacht to "stand and fight" regardless of the situation., Western historians claim that German defensive tactics could well have neutralized the Soviet advantage in men and weapons.

Although the outcome of the conflict had already been determined, Hitler forced the Wehrmacht to continue the fight against increasingly overwhelming odds. The situation had been completely reversed. First, the Russians had struggled desperately and valiantly to defend Mother Russia. Now the Germans fought fanatically to prevent the "Bolshevik" overrun of Europe and the destruction of the Fatherland. It was a barbaric struggle between two ideological enemies who would not quit until the other had been completely destroyed. In other words, "revolutionary Nazism and Communism were in the final convulsion of their terrible conflict for world domination."

Throughout 1944, and especially after the West had launched its invasion at Normandy that transferred substantial German forces from the Russian front to the West, the Soviets kept up their attacks maintaining pressure along the entire Eastern Front forcing the increasingly weakening Wehrmacht to continue its delaying tactics of withdrawal. While the eventual outcome of the war had been

decided, the struggle had now become a desperate fight to the death against the threatening "Slavic rape and pillage" of Germany "fanned by the death throes of Nazi fanaticism." By mid-August the Soviet summer offensive had reached East Prussia cutting off fifty German divisions in the Baltics while destroying most of the German forces in the central sectors, and only six weeks later, it had reached the Vistula river in Poland. By the end of the month, Rumania had been overrun ending the German's major supply of oil at Ploesti, Bulgaria had given up, and Finland soon sought peace with Russia. Meanwhile, the Western Allies had broken out of Normandy and raced across France to the German border inflicting another half million German casualties. That left the Third Reich in a practically defenseless position between the on-rushing massive armies from the East and the West. Obviously, it had become a useless and hopeless struggle which would only insure the destruction of the Fatherland and the unnecessary slaughter and suffering of the German military and people. Thus it was "all or nothing" for the Nazis, so it was easy for them to convince the German people that the Allied demand for "unconditional surrender" gave them no choice but to fight to the end.

In west Europe, the Allies had stretched their supplies and communications almost to the limit in pursuit of the Germans. That tempted the fanatical Fuehrer to make one last great effort to separate the "unholy alliance" between East and West and to save the Fatherland from destruction. Such a desperate and useless attack, known as the Ardennes offensive, could only result in the wasteful destruction of the last major resources of the German Wehrmacht and Luftwaffe. Then on January 12, 1945 Russia launched her strongest offensive of the war with 180 divisions which carried them to within 100 miles of Berlin. From that point onwards, the Germans attempted to hold fast in the East in the hope they might surrender separately to the Western Allies to prevent the total destruction of Germany. Under those circumstances, had the Allies not previously insisted upon "no separate surrenders" and had not agreed to separate fixed zones of occupation, the Americans could have probably occupied Berlin and beyond to the border of Poland. Then, after a treaty of peace, political control of Germany would have been assumed by a democratic government. That, of course, could also have saved the free world many of its postwar problems with the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, however, Roosevelt and Stalin had caused Churchill to

agree that Germany should be divided and occupied by the victors and the consequences became a political and historical nightmare

In their final desperation to escape death and destruction, the defeated remnants of the once-mighty Wehrmacht rushed to surrender to the Allies in the West. Meanwhile, both American and British forces waited peacefully at the prearranged dividing line of the Elbe river while the Russians rushed in to loot, rape and occupy Berlin. When the writer entered Berlin with the First US Airborne Army in July 1945, the Russians were still raping and looting throughout their sector of the city. Finally, on May 8 Germany had surrendered unconditionally to General Dwight Eisenhower at Rheims, France and, mercifully, the great catastrophe of the European War had ended.

Unquestionably, one of the biggest blunders of the war was Hitler's involvement of Germany in the dreaded "two-front war." There is no hard evidence that the Soviet Union would have attacked the German rear while it was occupied with the conquest of Great Britain. As it was, the outcome of the Battle of Britain had been decided by Hitler's blunder in shifting the bombing from the RAF sectors to London. Even so, had he not been preoccupied with the attack on Russia, the Germans undoubtedly would have defeated Britain. Then there would have been no threat of a Western invasion, Rommel's forces would not have been needed in Africa, the British threat in Greece would not have existed, no German forces would have been sent into Yugoslavia to delay the invasion of Russia, and Hitler would have conquered the Soviet Union. Still, the struggle between the Germans and the Soviets had been so close, it is certain that almost any change in the balance of chance would have gone to Hitler's advantage, and would have led to his victory over the Soviets. Surely, the Germans would have defeated the Soviets had Hitler not made the stupendous mistake of dividing his forces before Moscow. Furthermore, the argument that the transfer of Soviet forces from the front with Japan would have still overcome the Germans is unconvincing. Rather, the concentrated power of the German drive on Moscow would surely have captured the Russian capital and the Red Army and the Russian people would have been completely demoralized. By spring, the Wehrmacht and the Luftwaffe would have been replenished and regrouped, and most likely would have successfully defeated the Soviets. Since Adolf Hitler never had the intention of trying to capture all of Russia, and undoubtedly with Moscow in German

hands, Stalin would have had little choice but to seek an end to the long-lasting brutal struggle with Nazi Germany. Then in time, as in Czechoslovakia, Hitler would have taken over the control of all of Russia.

Another huge mistake by Hitler involved the ruthless actions of the Gestapo in the occupied Soviet areas. Hitler had ignored the fact that millions of Russians still opposed the Soviet regime. In Georgia, the Germans had been hailed as liberators, but Adolf Hitler's "rabid tirades" against the Slavs, as well as the Jews, led to executions, slave labor and conscription into the German armed forces. Soon his policy against the "Jewish-Bolshevik intelligentsia" resulted in the execution of all who opposed the Wehrmacht, and brutal reprisals took place against civilians in retaliation to the Soviet resistance. Many Russians have contended that the fanatic hatred of the Nazi dictator toward the "untermenchen" (inferior people), had destroyed his opportunity for the overthrow of the Soviet regime as well as the successful conquest of the Soviet Union.

German General von Rundstedt believed that Hitler's greatest mistake, like Napoleon, was his order to advance beyond the Dnieper River when he knew that the Russian Armies had not been decisively defeated west of the Dnieper. Had he not done so, he believed, the advance into the Caucasus and the Battle of Stalingrad would have been avoided, and the nature of the conflict would have been vastly different. Several of Hitler's generals said that his most destructive error had been his opposition to withdrawals that caused the unnecessary waste and decimation of the German forces. They also claimed that the Fuehrer also blundered critically with his decisions concerning the drive on Moscow, that by the time he decided to resume the advance on the Soviet capital, it was too late to succeed before the coming of winter. The too broad front of the German offensive from the Crimea to Leningrad was another serious misdirective by Hitler as logistical problems became insurmountable in a country with poor transportation facilities. In addition, the Fuehrer consistently over-reached the capabilities of his military. Moreover, original campaign objectives were ignored and, instead of holding what had been gained, Hitler sought to conquer too much of the vast and endless Soviet territory. German intelligence also failed miserably to determine conditions in Russia, as well as the nature, capability, morale and the potential of enemy resources. Finally, Hitler knew little about military matters and made the disastrous mistake of conducting the war on a political basis.

Even after Stalingrad, if Hitler had listened to his generals and resorted to logical defensive measures, the Russian offensives would most likely have been contained while Allied advances could have taken over Berlin and Germany, and the war could have ended before much of Central Europe was occupied by Soviet troops. The Western Allies could then have obtained the military and political leverage in their negotiations with Stalin, at least, to have denied the Soviet Union the status of a superpower.

F. H. Hinsley says that Hitler's attack on Russia, instead of benefiting his goal of world conquest, produced the worst possible circumstances for the people of Germany. He forced Great Britain and the Soviets to become allies which relieved the Japanese of their fear of Soviet aggression in the north. Encouraged to "go south" against Southeast Asia, their attack on Pearl Harbor brought America into the war against Germany as well as Japan. Hinsley also points out that the Fuehrer's critically disastrous "mistaken assumptions" were based on his belief that the Soviets would be defeated within three or four months. Consequently, when he failed to quickly eliminate Russia as his last enemy on the continent, Britain and Soviet collaboration strengthened and extended his two-front war. Then, as in World War I, the overwhelming balance of power of the United States was brought into the conflict. Nonetheless, had he attacked as "the liberator instead of the oppressor," he still might have prevailed against the Soviet Union.

The Fuehrer also had been erroneously convinced that even if Russia had managed to continue the struggle, his control of the entire armament and economic resources of Europe would enable the Third Reich to prevail over both Britain and America. Having convinced himself to first attack the Soviet Union in the place of Britain, and since the British attempt to invade at Dieppe had been a great disaster, Hitler believed his Atlantic Wall would be invincible against any Allied assault. Then after the defeat of the Soviet Union, the growing power of his Nazi forces would enable him to "reserve the right to take severe action against the United States as well." But he badly erred by grossly under-estimating the practically unlimited capacity of the United States to become "the arsenal of democracy."

Throughout World War II, and many years afterwards, Stalin was acclaimed by many as the great leader who had saved Russia and brought glorious victory to the valiant Soviet people. The tragedy, terror, treachery, sacrifice, suffering, and

the heroism of the "Great Patriotic War" continues to dominate the culture, politics, and the existence of Russia. But, particularly since the demise of Communism and the Soviet Union, the Russian people no longer accept much of the propaganda about the war and have questioned responsibility for the tragedy. They now know the military was not solely responsible for the terrible blunders for which the Russian people died and suffered so greatly. The generals who won the war rejected the charges against the military, restored the honor of many of the officers who were murdered by Stalin and, along with Soviet historians, have placed the blame squarely upon Josef Stalin for the catastrophe of the German attack on Russia. They charge that Stalin's errors caused the initial defeat and devastation of Russia; that his massacre of officers destroyed the strength and organization of the Red Army before the war; that Stalin knew the evidence against the officers had been falsified by Hitler's Gestapo; that his pact with Hitler had not benefited the Soviet Union; that the Soviet leader had intentionally ignored all evidence of a German invasion because of his mistaken belief that he had saved Russia by having created good relations with Nazi Germany; and that he had, in fact, obstructed military leaders from undertaking defensive measures that would have protected Russia and, perhaps, frustrated Hitler's assault on the Soviet Union.

It has been well-established that Josef Stalin was one of the most devious and evil dictators of all time, yet it has never been satisfactorily explained why he willingly allowed himself to be so completely deceived by Adolf Hitler? There is still no clear explanation why there were no defensive contingency plans for the Soviet Union in the face of so many obvious warnings? As Nikolai Tolstoy writes, "How did Stalin, the most suspicious of men, come to abandon even the most elementary precautions, and indeed become persuaded that war with Germany was impossible?" Was Stalin terrified that if war came the NKVD would be unable to maintain the Soviet control of Russia? Was that why he had large numbers of Red Army officers killed as the Germans approached Moscow? Did he reinstate the Red Army commissars to prevent defections to the Germans? The fact is that no defensive measures were ordered until many hours after the initial German assault had struck, and an entire day had passed before Stalin approved an order for the first counterattack. Tolstoy suggests that Stalin could not believe that Hitler would have violated the Nazi-Soviet Pact against the West leaving

Russia without allies and doomed to certain destruction. His panic had been so great that he was not publicly seen or heard from until eleven days later when the Soviet Politburo demanded that he speak to the nation by radio to organize resistance against the Nazis attack.

Soviet historians accuse Stalin's government of having been "inept, near-sighted and inefficient," and for "not being prepared to handle the Nazi aggression." They also charge that if Stalin had taken the "obvious and necessary" defensive measures at the borders, the course of the war would have been different; that Nazism and Communism were already locked in a life-and-death struggle; that it had always been well-known that Hitler had aggressive aims towards Russia; that Germany had been consistently hostile against the Soviet Union; that Hitler had stated in his *Mein Kampf* in 1926 that when Russia was beaten, England would be deprived of its last hope, and Germany would dominate Europe. They also claimed that it was well known that since Hitler feared a Russian-British-American coalition might prevent his conquest, Russia had to be eliminated.

The post-war Soviets also accused Hitler of committing a major blunder in misjudging the ability of the Soviet people to oppose the Nazi assault. They believe the Germans greatly underrated the commitment of the Russian people to Communism, as well as the unity, strength and progress of the Soviet Union as a cultural and industrial power. They charged Britain and the United States also with blunders for downgrading the military strength and potential of the Soviet people who "won World War II." After the death of Stalin in 1953, the de-Stalinization period was initiated by Premier Nikita Khrushchev and continued until 1962 when "orthodox Communist conformity" began to reassert itself. Yet, many who held revisionist views of the Soviet war-time leadership were "disciplined" by the Communist party.

Surely, one of Stalin's greatest errors was his belief that Nazi Germany would not attack Russia in spite of so much evidence to the contrary, but the most important blunder by the Soviets with the most far-reaching consequences was Stalin's pact with Hitler. He apparently believed that the pact would protect Russia from a war in which Germany and the West would kill each other off so that Soviet Communism could takeover Europe, or at least, could line up with the winning side and get its share of the spoils. His argument that the pact gave

him time for the Soviets to increase their resistance to a Nazi attack is demolished by the total absence of Russian defensive preparations which gave Hitler an overwhelming success for his initial assault. To the contrary, the pact not only permitted, but encouraged Hitler to begin the war, and to defeat and occupy Poland. It also had not only enabled Germany to defeat the West without fear of being stabbed in the back, it gave Hitler the time to build up his powerful military supported by the resources of conquered Europe to be used against the Soviet Union. It had been long apparent that Hitler would attack Russia since their dictatorial ideologies would inevitably struggle for supremacy. Indeed, had Hitler left the war to the German generals, the Soviet domination of Russia would likely have been eliminated. However, Adolf Hitler made one of his greatest blunders of World War II by taking over the direction of the war for himself. Although his initial political attainments had been joyously approved by the German people, once his armed aggressions were met by substantial opposition in both the east and the west, his assumption of the direction of military strategy "based on an intuition badly infected by ignorance, emotional attitudes and fanatic hates," brought only death, destruction and suffering to Germany and much of Europe.

It was ironic that Josef Stalin would say that the Soviet Union would have lost the war without American production. Yet at war's end, it was international Communism, championed by the Soviet Union, that occupied and controlled East Germany and East Europe for nearly fifty years, and it was Communism that took the lives of almost 100,000 Americans in Korea and in Vietnam. Meanwhile, untold millions of people suffered and died in China, Korea, Vietnam, Africa, and Afghanistan, as well as in innumerable insurrections in many parts of the world, due directly to the militant subversion and intervention of international Communism originated, financed and promoted by the Soviet Union. Lastly, and most tragically, millions of people around the world continued to die and suffer from hunger, illness and hopelessness as the indirect result of the rampant waste of worldwide resources in the armed confrontation of the superpowers which threatened humanity with a nuclear holocaust for nearly half a century.

As Britisher Richard Overy summarized it so well, "The Soviet Union bore the brunt of the German onslought and broke the back of German

power...Without Soviet resistance it is difficult to see how the democratic world would have defeated the new German empire except by sitting tight and waiting until atomic weapons had been developed." And Author Len Deighton alleges in his *Blood, Tears and Folly* that "A calculation based upon the deployment of German divisions in combat per month shows that 7/8ths of all fighting in which the Germans engaged in 1939-1945 took place on the Eastern Front. In other words, only 1/8th of the entire German war effort was put into their campaigns in North Africa, Italy and the Western Front." In the final analysis, however, the long struggle against Nazi Germany was maintained only by the rapid massive availability of arms production from the United States which aided the remarkable recovery of the Soviet economy and manpower which eventually won the brutal struggle on the Eastern Front.

It is irrefutable that the valiant struggle of the Russian people provided the overwhelming balance of men and sacrifice that enabled the defeat of the greatest worldwide menace to civilization in the history of mankind. It is a fact that two-thirds of the armed forces and military resources in World War II were employed in the life or death brutal struggle between Russia and Germany that consumed the lives of more than thirty million human beings amidst such suffering and destruction as the world had never known. Clearly, without the great sacrifice of the Russian people Adolf Hitler would have won control of all of Europe and probably most of the world. Therefore, the glorious victory over the brutal aggressions of the German military by the heroic struggle of the Russian people was the major factor that led to the defeat of a Nazi triumph of world conquest.

Chapter 6

The Strategic Bombing Offensive

When the war in Europe finally ended in May 1945, probably the greatest surprise was that the Germans had attained their highest level of armament production during the last months of the war. Actually, despite the awesome and devastating Allied aerial bombing destruction of much of Germany, Nazi propaganda and inhumane treatment had exploited the German people, enforced foreign labor, prisoners and concentration camp inmates to continue the manufacture of large quantities of weapons until Germany's final and complete collapse. Indeed, many questions had been raised during the war over the formulation and justification of Allied bombing policies on both strategic and moral grounds. Not only had there been great public concern over the massive application of terror, death, and destruction that was used in area bombings of large civilian populations, there was also much disagreement among the Allies over the general operation of the strategic bombing offensive and its effectiveness in reducing the enemy's ability to continue the war.

Back towards the end of World War I, Great Britain had brought together the air arms from its Army and Navy to form an independent Royal Air Force and the strategic bombing concept became the justification for their new independent armed service. They believed that airpower would greatly strengthen the security of the British Isles and would give them their only truly effective offensive capability against the huge land powers on the continent. In 1917-18 the Germans had initiated aerial bombing raids against London and Britain began to develop an independent capability to bomb Berlin and other cities in Germany. But when the First World War ended the entire British bomber force consisted of

only nine squadrons which saw little action. However, they had become convinced that strategic bombing would play a vital role in any future war.

The British Official History entitled *The Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany 1939-1945*, summarized the policy as "a means of direct attack on the enemy state with the object of depriving it of the means or will to continue the war," while pointing out that it might have been the "instrument of victory" itself or by which "victory can be won by others." It cited the advantage that it could be "brought to bear immediately, directly and destructively against the heartland of the enemy," and that its role was "not only above, but also beyond that of armies and navies." The new concept not only claimed its own special and independent role against encroachments by the British Army and Navy, but also claimed that the old maxim of "the best defense is a good offense," held true in the air as well as upon the ground.

In the United States after the First War, General Billy Mitchell became the best known advocate of aerial bombing by an independent American Air Force and successfully demonstrated its effectiveness. Not only was he opposed by the existing military establishment, he was actually court-martialed in 1926 for his progressive views. So America did not create an independent air force until after World War II, inter-service rivalries greatly delayed development of modern policies and resources, and it was not until after the United States entered the Second World War that its vast potential for offensive aerial warfare was recognized and applied. Unlike the United States, Britain's separate RAF enabled it to independently operate, not only in defense of enemy air attacks, but to undertake offensive operations to destroy the enemy's war-making capabilities and to force an end to hostilities. Thus the concept was developed which became the controversial policy of the Allied Strategic Offensive Bombing Campaign in World War II.

The Hague Conference after World War I on the "Rules of Aerial Warfare" had prohibited the bombing of civilian populations and damage to non-military property. Yet the rapid use of aerial warfare by both sides in the First World War had proved the effectiveness of bombing for successful damage to an enemy's capacity for war-making. The practice of strategic bombing had been long established and Napoleon, for instance, had believed that once an enemy's capital was subject to bombardment, the war had been won. In modern warfare, it was generally assumed that wars could be more easily and quickly won by airpower since

it could by-pass the enemy's land and sea forces, eliminate high casualties of trench warfare, devastate the enemy's most important and vulnerable centers, destroy the morale and will of the people to resist, and bring the conflict to an early end.

In World War II, the Allies accused Adolf Hitler of using bomber attacks first to terrorize civilian populations during the "blitz" on London. The Germans, however, argued that both sides started the practice without considering its strategic effect and the development of "brutality and destruction" which would obviously follow, as each found it to be a quick and available method to damage the enemy. But it is the nature of war that once begun, the aggressive escalation of violence usually has no end until one adversary has gained the domination of the other. Unquestionably, Germany's ability to continue the conflict was critically restricted by Allied aerial assaults, many of her armament facilities were crippled or destroyed, the communication and transportation systems were almost totally disrupted, unimaginable terror and hardship was inflicted on urban populations, and many thousands of casualties with untold suffering and vast destruction was imposed upon the German people by the Allied bombing campaign.

While there is general agreement that Allied air superiority deserves much credit towards the victory over Germany, the claim that the Allied Strategic Bombing Offensive had successfully broken "the will and the power of the enemy armed forces' ability to continue the conflict, and thus enabled the Allied Powers to defeat Germany," is widely challenged. Moreover, much criticism has been directed at the slaughter of thousands upon thousands of German civilians which was considered to have been immoral, inhumane, and unjustified. And, contrary to its objective to hasten the defeat of the enemy, it actually caused much of the hatred and resentment upon which the fanatic resistance was based that prolonged the war and greatly increased its terrible consequences. Other major aspects of the controversial Allied air policies were also strongly criticized such as the interdiction of Normandy, support of airborne operations, and the use of tactical air strikes.

British Admiral Gerald Dickens held that Britain violated its classic military maxim when she failed to provide the "Concentration and Economy of Force" to protect her status as a great maritime power. He argued that Britain's aerial bombing resources had been so divided between the protection of sea transport

and communications, support for Britain's ground forces, and the strategic bombing of Germany that her most vital objective, the survival of the British Empire, was lost. Dickens also argued that had the effort and the assets that were directed at "total war with total surrender" had been used against the enemy forces at sea and in the field, the war would have ended earlier at less cost. Furthermore, there is strong support for his contention that the Allies failed to win the purpose for which the war was fought—the cause of world peace, by having unnecessarily prolonged the ending of the war.

The options available to Great Britain's wartime leaders were critically limited by the lack of adequate resources for such a small nation to fight a second war within twenty-one years. The defeat and the practical elimination of her ground forces on the continent by the German "blitzkrieg" in France had been shocking and demoralizing, and the prospect of resisting the terrifying invasion of the brutal Nazis seemed hopeless. Standing alone, Britain had been almost completely defenseless and there was little help from any quarter. The prospect of survival in 1940 was practically hopeless. Total defeat and annihilation by the invading Germans appeared to be certain and literally nothing, other than a miracle, could avoid disaster.

Fatefully with rare foresight, Britain's leaders had begun to build-up their fighter and bomber strength before the war and actions were taken to conserve Britain's fighter aircraft during the attack on France, much to the distress of the French. Both Germany and Britain were convinced that a cross-channel invasion could not succeed without air superiority and the British realized that their only hope to avoid a German conquest would depend upon the fighters and bombers of the RAF. Most fortunately, enlightened leadership had seen the need for greatly improved airpower and had begun the production of excellent fighter aircraft as well as long-range bombers. They also believed that if the battle in the air could be won, the government could be convinced that a strategic bombing campaign by the RAF would provide Britain with its best, if not only, chance to hold off the enemy until Britain could become stronger, and that America might enter the war.

Clearly the development of the bombing offensive policy in principle was logical, necessary, and inevitable under the conditions and attitudes which faced Britain at the outset of the war. It was the only major weapon available for

Britain to offensively use against the enemy and, as would later be proven, it provided another opportunity for the United States to apply its powerful resources to destroy the enemy's ability to continue the war. While there was little disagreement over the general strategy of aerial bombing itself, there was great dissension over the questionable concentration of aerial resources on area bombing which would prevent other operations which might end the war sooner. It was also considered to have been an inexcusable and unforgivable crime for so-called moral and civilized societies to willfully bomb and destroy civilian areas in which there were no legitimate military targets. Many opponents believed that it was a violation of the Hague Convention and against the principles of the established conduct of warfare.

Long before the war, both the British and the German air services had reached the obvious conclusion that airpower would play an important role in future wars, and that it would be the decisive weapon. Obviously, Hitler's abandonment of the restrictions of Versailles, followed by the rapid build-up of Germany's armed forces with a strong Luftwaffe, posed a definite threat to Germany's neighbors. Moreover if a war began and Germany occupied France and the Low Countries, then Britain would once again be vulnerable to enemy air assaults. Obviously in her isolated position, there would be limited opportunities for Britain's navy and army to wage effective offensive warfare against an enemy which might control much of the continent. Since bombing attacks would precede an invasion, both defensive and offensive air capabilities were essential for the survival of Britain, and for the eventual defeat of the enemy.

Fortunately for the strategic bombing theory, former Group Captain Arthur Harris was assigned to the RAF Plans section in 1934. He was one of the first RAF officers to be convinced that another war with Germany would be decided in the air and that Britain could not win such a struggle without the capability to massively bomb the enemy's homeland. He campaigned tirelessly to convince Britain's leadership on the necessity to develop the capacity to carry heavy bombloads to accurately strike and destroy targets in Germany. While plans were already being prepared to produce medium bombers, Harris argued they were already obsolete and that only long-range bombers operating at night with heavy bomb capacities could successfully accomplish Britain's offensive objectives.

The German Air Force had come into existence in March 1935 when Herman Goering was appointed Commander of the Luftwaffe. But, the Germans had been disappointed with their Gotha bombings of London during World War I and, consequently, committed one of their most fatal blunders by assuming that strategic bombing would have no important role in the next war. The predictions of Italian General Gulio Douhet, and numerous British military leaders, that long-range bombing would become a new and essential weapon in warfare were ignored. They had become so preoccupied with Hitler's demand for the aggressive power to win a "quick war" that Ernst Udet, Germany's most famous prewar flyer, was able to convince the Luftwaffe that its most vital role would be dive-bombing in support of Germany's powerfully armored offensives. Furthermore, Hitler and Goering had recognized the political impact of masses of attacking aircraft both for intimidating adversaries and to deter potential enemy attacks for fear of massive retaliation. They also recognized that smaller aircraft could be built more quickly at less cost.

Mistakenly, Germany gave priority to the production of fast and light twin-engined bombers instead of the heavier four-engine long-range aircraft that would have provided an effective offensive bombing capability. By the time the war began, in spite of having developed several prototypes for four-engine aircraft, Germany had no long-range bombers. Three types of medium bombers were produced for limited offensive purposes, and amazingly, until 1939 the Luftwaffe believed that every bomber should have a dive-bombing capability. Undoubtedly, that was another of Germany's most critical errors of the war since small bombers could not be used successfully against an enemy as far away as Britain or Russia. Eventually, it became a stupendous blunder which greatly limited the influence of Germany's airpower on the outcome of the war.

In 1936 Harris had participated in a inter-service study that projected defensive plans in the event of war with Germany in 1939, and it led the Chiefs of Staff to give top priority for the development of a "strategic bombing force" to reduce the enemy's economic resistance in a war. Britain quickly began to expand the RAF to 1,512 planes including 990 bombers. Against the Luftwaffe with 2,500 aircraft, including an estimated 1,700 first-line bombers, and with a proposed French Air Force of 2,000 planes to include 775 bombers, the Allies would have available a total of 1,765 bombers. But the French were without a strong

bombing capacity which would prevent an effective resistance against the combined assault by the German Wehrmacht and the Luftwaffe. Most importantly, the British army and navy had been persuaded to accept an essential role for strategic bombing with priority for the development of specially-designed new twin-engine and four-engine heavy bombing aircraft. The decision was both timely and fortunate, according to Dudley Saward, for the policy was given priority in spite of the fact that strategic bombing was a new concept of warfare, and that much of the public considered aerial bombing to be "a dirty word" that would bring new terrors of large civilian casualties to both sides.

The RAF study proved to be a generally correct estimate of the situation that followed. It was obvious that initially Britain could depend only upon its air and naval resources for defense. The possibility of France's early defeat was considered, the entrance of the United States into the war could not be predicted, and the incredible blunders by the Germans could not, of course, be foreseen. But, it was expected that some 420 fighters, plus bomber command, would provide an adequate resistance until the bombers could be built for action against the enemy. Since new bombers in sufficient numbers could not be produced before 1941, and with four-engine aircraft scheduled to arrive in 1942, an effective defense was essential for survival until the offensive could be undertaken. As a result of the continuing efforts of such far-sighted RAF leaders as Harris, Charles Portal, Robert Saundby and Edgar Ludlow-Hewitt, in addition to Winston Churchill, strong support rapidly developed for the necessity for long-range bombers that resulted in their availability at Britain's most vital hour.

Harris also developed the concept of using aircraft to drop "anti-ship bombs." The British Navy immediately saw the possibility of using mines dropped by the RAF which led to the development of the magnetic mine. Aerial mine-laying became a highly efficient weapon against Nazi shipping and submarines and became a decisive weapon which greatly helped to bring about victory in the ferocious Battle of the Atlantic. Without the successful maintenance of the vital wartime "life line" from America and Canada to Britain and Russia, the outcome of the war would have been doubtful.

By 1937, however, a "political" decision based on economic considerations was taken by the British government to reduce the expansion of the RAF. The fact that fighters could be acquired quicker, and at less cost, led to an increased

production of fighter aircraft and more medium bombers were scheduled instead of long-range aircraft. Bomber Command believed it was the victim of a grave mistake since it delayed the development of the strategic bomber offensive capability until after the Battle of Britain which significantly prolonged the war. They overlooked, however, the fact that the decision had fortunately strengthened Fighter Command at the most critical time possible and had enabled its valiant few to defeat the Luftwaffe and to save Britain from occupation by the Nazis.

Shortly thereafter, Harris was sent to the United States on the special and highly important mission of using America's "incredibly generous" Lend-Lease arrangement, in spite of her neutrality, to give Britain credit to procure urgently needed military equipment and supplies. If lesser important planes and equipment could be acquired in America, then Britain could concentrate its full facilities on the production of vitally needed fighter and bomber aircraft. He also obtained helpful information on American techniques regarding navigation and blind-flying methods, air operations policy, training, airfield development, armor, and weapons. But most important were the contacts he made with American air force leaders such as General "Hap" Arnold who would later command the US Army Air Forces in Europe. Harris also established good connections with other American leaders which would greatly benefit the development and execution of the Allied strategic bombing campaign.

Fortunately for America and its Allies, Adolf Hitler's fanatic threats of aggression against the Czechs at the Nuremburg rally in 1938 led Franklin Roosevelt to order the expansion of America's production of aircraft. Robert Sherwood has written that the President "was sure that we were going to get into the war and he believed that air power would win it." From a small air force which had not been enlarged while the European war clouds had gathered, Roosevelt's sudden goal was to produce an immediate 10,000 aircraft with a capacity to provide 20,000 more for each year thereafter. Another timely decision involved the development of the four-engine Boeing B-17 of which there were only thirteen of the most famous American bomber of World War II on hand when the war started in 1939. These important first steps rapidly led to the development of the most powerful air force ever assembled. However, Britain had to struggle almost entirely alone for four years before American airpower could be built up enough by 1943 to make any significant effort against Germany. Since Franklin

Roosevelt had pledged to keep America out of the European war, most Americans had believed that since their participation in World War I had failed to preserve the peace, there was little justification to become involved in yet another European conflict.

In 1936 Britain observed Germany's rapid build-up of the Luftwaffe and adopted a goal of 990 first-line aircraft for Bomber Command, but when the war began there were only fifty-five squadrons available including many out-dated aircraft. Twenty-two squadrons were assigned for replacements and for training, ten squadrons equipped with the single-engine Fairey Battle planes had been sent to France with bombs that were too small to use against Germany, and the remaining twenty-three squadrons consisting of twin-engine Blenheims, Whitleys, Wellingtons and Hampdens gave Great Britain a reasonably effective bombing force. Initially, daylight bombing raids were attempted against German coastal naval facilities, but such heavy losses were inflicted by German fighters that only night operations were flown after April 1940. Then Bomber Command committed a critical error by assuming that their aircraft could navigate accurately day or night to successfully bomb its targets in spite of enemy fighter defenses.

Prior to the German assault on the West there had been only limited air activity by the Allies. The French were opposed to Bomber Command operations from bases in France for fear of retaliation, and the RAF was actually incapable of undertaking successful bombing offensives. In fact, it was considered to have been a miracle that Germany had failed to strike England early when victory was almost certain. Harris made the most of the German delay by developing improvements in equipment, operational procedures and personnel for strategic bombing as Britain's only opportunity for aggressive action against the enemy. Fortunately, he gained the complete support of Bomber Command leaders and much progress was attained in important areas of future operations. Perhaps most importantly, he established a thoroughly revised and updated training procedure uniquely developed for aircrews using simulated bombing conditions. In the meantime, Bomber Command engaged itself principally in the limited, but successful, operations of mine-laying in the channel and leaflet-dropping on the continent.

Most timely, just before the Nazis had attacked the Allies on the continent, Air Marshal C.F.A. Portal took over Bomber Command and strongly supported the strategic bombing concept believing it would be essential for victory over

Germany. He and Arthur Harris were convinced the war would be decided in the air and that Britain could only hope to win it by massive bomber strikes against the enemy. They also recognized that it would be necessary to carry heavy bombloads a great distance to Germany against fierce opposition and that the foresighted development of heavier and more advanced aircraft had provided Britain the capability for successful offensive operations. They already had the prototypes for the renowned bombers which would form the basic offensive force Britain would need throughout the war. Also, Portal and Harris had brought the required leadership which enabled the Royal Air Force to survive as an independent service. In the final analysis, once the Germans had overrun Holland, Belgium and France and left the British almost undefended against the certainty of an invasion by the powerful and aggressive Nazis, only the limited resources and the valiant courage of the young men of the RAF stood as the last barrier of freedom for the British people..

In the meantime, Germany had developed a strong offensive capability with 1,500 medium-range bombers which posed a serious threat to all of Britain once operations could be launched from France and the Low Countries. Providentially, Hitler and Goering blundered critically by not attacking France and the Low Countries before the assault on Poland. While Germany would have been substantially less powerful, the British and French were almost totally unprepared to fight, would have been quickly eliminated, and Hitler would have easily occupied Poland and disposed of the Soviet Union without fear of an attack from the rear. Or even after the Polish victory, if the Germans had quickly struck the West at the beginning of the "Phony War," the defeat of France and Britain would have been quickly accomplished and Russia, against the full forces of the Third Reich, would have fallen shortly thereafter. As it turned out, the "Phony War" had provided an additional eight months for Britain to strengthen the RAF, and once Germany launched its attack in the West, the British intentionally held back part of their air force to defend Britain. Had they not done so, the Battle of Britain would have been lost. Nonetheless, French Prime Minister Paul Reynaud claimed that by withholding twenty-five fighter squadrons, Britain had caused the Battle of France to be lost for lack of aircraft. But, the fact was that Allied air operations against the invading Germans had been largely ineffective. At the opening Battle of Sedan the French Air Service was "badly mauled"

and, when Bomber Command sent seventy-one of its planes to Sedan, only thirty-one returned. After several other weak and ineffective attacks, Britain's remaining bombers were withdrawn to the United Kingdom.

Immediately after the retreat from Dunkirk, the aircraft of Fighter Command and Bomber Command were thrown into the desperate struggle to deny the Luftwaffe air supremacy over England which would be essential for a successful invasion. RAF Bombers were dispatched to attack the invasion barges, troops, equipment and supplies which were being assembled in the Channel coastal ports. As RAF and Luftwaffe fighters clashed in the fierce struggle over the Channel and Southeast England, the Germans first directed their relentless bomber attacks on RAF facilities, then against the production of aircraft and military resources, and finally, during the last phase of the battle, urban centers and civilian populations were bombed during the infamous English "Blitz." Early in the battle, the indomitable Winston Churchill, an early champion of offensive bombing, took over the War Council and Bomber Command was authorized to strike targets beyond the Rhine. The next night ninety-nine bombers struck oil and railway facilities in the Ruhr and it was the beginning of the strategic bombing campaign against Germany.

Public outrage in Britain over the German bombings of Rotterdam and other cities had greatly reduced opposition to indiscriminate bombing, and Churchill was among the first to believe that offensive bombing gave Britain its only immediate and powerful weapon against the enemy. But once operations over Germany were begun, extremely heavy losses occurred. In fact, for the first two years Bomber Command failed to obtain its objectives, and the largely ineffective results of the bombing campaign could not justify the heavy loss of aircrews and aircraft. Moreover, the army and the navy, and particularly the Battle of the Atlantic, were denied resources which might have had a greater influence upon the war. Obviously, the initial concept of strategic bombing was flawed. Its critics claimed that Bomber Command had "greatly overestimated" its accomplishments, and that most of the raids had been ineffective due mainly to serious navigational and bombing-accuracy problems of night operations. Investigation confirmed that only one-in-ten of the bombings were dropped within five miles of their targets. Furthermore, since Britain did not have the capability for night-time blind-flying so as to accurately reach and to effectively

drop heavy bomb-loads on specific targets in Germany, it was suggested that the long distance bombings could be little more than "a political and psychological weapon of propaganda and emotional retaliation."

While the eventual bombing of English cities by the Germans would have been inevitable, Hitler had refused permission for the Luftwaffe to bomb London fearing worldwide political repercussions. Therefore, as previously reported, the first German attack on London had not been intentional and actually resulted from a navigational error. The British people were outraged and demanded retaliation against German cities. Indeed, it was reported that Winston Churchill hoped for such an excuse to use Bomber Command against Germany, and on the next night he ordered British bombers to attack Berlin. And, it was in this way that the strategic bombing campaign had its beginning.

Other limited successes with night operations had been obtained on targets such as the sub-pens of northern Germany in the ports of Hamburg, Kiel, Bremen and Wilhelmshaven and with the continued placement of sea-mines against enemy shipping and submarines. Other assaults, however, failed due to the almost totally inadequate capability to reach objectives by blind-flying at night, as well as the inability to strike unseen targets. Even when the missions were successful, the bombloads were too small to do much damage. And great controversy continued over Bomber Command's assumed capabilities and priorities in relation to the urgent need for added air resources against German naval bases and the U-boats in the Atlantic.

But Portal and Harris refused to be distracted from their commitment to the mission of Bomber Command. By 1940 the heavier bombers planned in 1936 began to come on-line and the first to be delivered was the Avro Manchester which was found to have many serious deficiencies. Its modified version, however, produced the famous Lancaster which became the most successful British bomber of the war. Furthermore, the Manchester-inspired improvements contributed greatly to the development and the effectiveness of the Stirling, Halifax, and Hampden bombers which followed. Still, three months into the Battle of Britain, with Portal as Chief of the Air Staff and with Harris as his Deputy, the status of Bomber Command remained incapable of making a vital contribution to the defeat of Britain's powerful enemy. Indisputably, however, it was the leadership of Arthur Harris which brought about the advanced equipment, systems,

and operational procedures which led to the essential development and the execution of the Strategic Bombing Offensive of World War II. In fact, he characterized the campaign by saying, "They sowed the wind and now they are going to reap the whirlwind."

In the beginning, Bomber Command's operations were limited by the number and technical quality of its bomber force. The inferior Whitley bombers were successfully used for dropping leaflets at night and the Wellington bombers were used in daylight raids against German naval craft and installations. But many of the bombers were shot down by German fighters. Due to heavy losses in daytime operations, it was decided that crews and planes were more important than accuracy and that all future operations would be undertaken at night. While Bomber Command's operations had little influence on the early campaign on the continent nor during the Battle of Britain, it developed the capability for mounting effective future operations against the enemy. It also held off the assignment of its limited resources for other army and navy tasks while emphasizing the training of skilled pilots and crews and the development of aircraft and procedures to best enable the RAF to hold off a relentless enemy.

By mid-1941 Bomber Command had substantially advanced its capability to bomb targets in Germany. A study of Germany's military, economic, and political status concluded that the enemy's greatest vulnerability involved it's transportation system and factories producing war-making materiel. Consequently, the focus of the attacks would "direct the main effort of the bomber force, until further instructions, towards dislocating the German transportation system and to destroying the morale of the civilian population as a whole, and of the industrial workers in particular." Arthur Harris had convinced the Air Staff that, since specific targets could not be bombed accurately at night, strategic bombing should be directed at densely populated areas where the night-time attacks would likely be most effective.

Following the new policy, the night raids on Germany revealed the shortage of bombers available for missions and the continuing difficulties encountered by the aircraft in reaching their targets with accurate bombing. As a result, a stronger strategic offensive campaign capable of forcing a surrender by Germany within a year would be undertaken when 4,000 new aircraft were obtained. However, the difficulties and shortcomings of the existing bombing efforts

aroused opposition to the allocation of much of the limited aircraft production for an objective four years in the future. Even though the bombing campaign's supporters believed it was the best way to help the Soviets resist the Nazi attack, the continuation of a questionably effective bombing campaign remained in doubt. Winston Churchill had also begun to be skeptical about Bomber Command's "unconfirmed claims and unwarranted optimism" over its objectives. The disappointing and questionable performance of the RAF's bombing operations appeared to indicate that serious errors had been made in the concept and application of it's strategic campaign.

Just as it appeared that Bomber Command was about to lose some of its privileged status, the development of new and improved navigational aids greatly enhanced prospects for more successful bombing missions. Most importantly, a "Gee" system utilizing the point of intersection between radio waves could be used to identify the exact position of an aircraft in flight. However, the maximum range of the new device limited bombing targets to a distance of 350 miles and made it relatively easy for the Germans to interfere with its operation. By mid-1941 many new Wellington bombers were being produced, and less than a year later new 4-engine Lancaster, Sterling and Halifax heavy bombers became available. It remained obvious, however, that before Bomber Command could successfully execute its strategic bombing offensive, much had to be done to greatly improve its navigational range and target accuracy.

Fortunately for Bomber Command, Churchill's Scientific Advisor Lord Cherwell (Professor Frederick Lindemann) was convinced that a concentrated heavy bombing assault would be a necessary part of winning the war. He also believed that the homes and the morale of German workers needed to be destroyed as an integral part of Germany's war-making industrial capacity. His investigation found that the RAF's bombing accuracy had been a miserable failure and he strongly supported improvements for navigational and bombing accuracy that enabled the bomber force to greatly improve its deficiencies. Meanwhile, Churchill ordered the conservation of Bomber Command resources until its future operations became more successful. Soon concentrated research and development produced a cathode-ray tube radio-location device which enabled an aircraft to identify terrain features over which it was flying. And it

would be the end of 1942 before the bomber direction accuracy would exceed its existing limitations.

The end of 1941 was an exceedingly difficult time for both Britain and the United States. Shortly after the Japanese sneak attack had dealt a disastrous blow to the American Navy at Pearl Harbor, which brought America into the war, a number of embarrassing and crippling losses were also inflicted upon the British by the Japanese. Moreover, three of Germany's capital ships had boldly and successfully dashed through the English Channel, and Bomber Command had failed to inflict any damage upon them in broad daylight. Out of 242 bombers dispatched to pursue the ships, few of the planes could find the enemy in bad weather and fifteen planes failed to return. Bomber Command was immediately criticized for its failure to stop or interfere with the ship's passage, as well as for having failed to seriously damage the port of Brest where the ships had been berthed. It could not be understood how it would be possible for targets in Germany to be reached and destroyed when repeated attacks against nearby Brest were largely wasted?

Even though the British people were greatly relieved and encouraged by the entry of the powerful United States as an ally against Germany, their distressing ordeals continued as the Japanese sank several of their major warships near Malaysia. Singapore surrendered in Britain's greatest military disaster threatening the end of the British Empire throughout the Far East, and Rommel's Africa Korps was headed to cut-off British interests in the Middle East. Furthermore, they knew it would be at least a year before America could make a significant contribution to the struggle. Meanwhile, British leaders believed their only practical opportunity to take the offense against the enemy required them to launch the heaviest bombing attacks possible against Germany. They also thought it would provide the quickest and most aggressive means to open up a "Second Front" to relieve Nazi pressure against the desperate Soviets which Josef Stalin had aggressively demanded of the Western democracies.

The year of 1941 had also ended disappointingly for Bomber Command. In spite of substantial losses, the two previous years had not brought about the expected disruption and destruction of Germany's war capacities. Furthermore, the sudden Soviet reversal of the German attack on Moscow began to increase pressures to divert the use of Britain's bombing aircraft for other purposes. But

on February 14, 1942, the RAF Air Staff directed that the "primary object" of the bombing offensive was to "be focused on the morale of the enemy population and, particularly, on the industrial workers," and "to employ your effort without restriction," subject to certain directions. In effect, the area bombing policy had been made the principal operation of the war for Bomber Command and it became a great controversy between those who considered it to be necessary to end the war, and those who regarded it as "an inhumane and barbarous policy against innocent civilian populations."

It soon followed that Harris was appointed to direct Bomber Command as Britain's major offensive weapon of the war. He had long been convinced that the area bombing campaign would not only turn the war around, but would also force the conflict to an end. Although he had not originated the policy, he believed it to be Britain's only practical option under the prevailing circumstances, and that it deserved a priority over all other Allied operations. He also convinced the Americans to use their vast bombing potential to support his concept of the air offensive against Germany. Consequently, while he was credited for the immensely important expansion, training, and operations of Bomber Command, he was substantially criticized for his role in developing the area bombing policy and for its domination of the air war against Germany. For example, Liddell Hart wrote that, "his views and decisions were shown to be mistaken," and that "terrorization became without reservation the definite policy of the British Government, although still disguised in answers to Parliamentary questions."

When Harris took over Bomber Command in February 1942, it had only 300 aircraft including only fifty heavy bombers, to build into what he wanted to become the greatest offensive operation of the war. Most timely, newly available navigational aids enabled him to immediately begin to stage limited raids against the enemy. His first strike involved an experimental raid with 235 bombers against a Renault factory near Paris and obtained encouraging results. After the Air Staff selected Cologne and the Ruhr area as major targets, three attacks against Essen were partly successful, and in an attack on Cologne fifty percent of the planes struck their target with substantial damage. More test raids followed with increasing effectiveness which convinced Harris that navigational progress would justify concentrated raids of selected targets in Germany. And, by that

time, Bomber Command's improving performance began to gain public support for its operations and enabled Churchill to boast to Roosevelt that only bad weather had prevented the RAF from maintaining a continuous assault on the Nazi Reich.

Since the number of bombers available during 1942 was limited, and Bomber Command raids had been less successful than expected, it was decided that incendiaries would create greater destruction of factory facilities in large cities. In March, 234 bombers raided Lubeck with 300 tons of bombs that were half incendiaries causing substantial destruction and loss of life, and Rostock was attacked with incendiaries resulting in large areas destroyed by fires. The Germans were particularly furious over the damage to historic Lubeck and retaliated by ordering Luftwaffe raids on historic Bath, Canterbury, York and Exeter among others. But Churchill adamantly opposed any change in Britain's bombing policy.

The Cologne attack convinced Harris that better navigational aids would permit concentrated raids to produce devastating destruction in the major cities of Germany. Next, he demanded more aircraft to deliver heavier bombings against larger industrial areas and he became obsessed with his goal of mounting "1,000 bomber raids" on Germany. He also insisted on increased defensive measures to reduce bomber losses by German fighter attacks. After collecting every available aircraft, including second-rate and training planes, Cologne was attacked again on May 30, 1942 by 1,046 planes. About 600 acres of the city were destroyed, more than in nine previous months of raids, with the loss of forty aircraft. A few weeks later, Essen was raided by 956 planes with thirty-six lost, and when 904 bombers were sent to Bremen, forty-five planes were shot down. Still, the raids inflicted no serious damage. So large raids were suspended and were not resumed until the following year.

However, the British people had become very proud that the RAf had managed to launch such powerful attacks against the enemy and their morale was greatly lifted in the belief that Britain, at last, was effectively fighting back against the Nazis. Increasing public and governmental support enabled Bomber Command to build-up its forces to fifty squadrons and navigational advances greatly increased their operational potential. In fact, Harris notified Churchill that he had proved that within a few months a "sufficient bomber force" could raze thirty to forty German cities which would destroy the morale of the German

people, and would cripple the assault on the Soviet Union. His claims were excessive and unjustified since the bombing attacks by the RAF had been of practically negligible effect upon Germany's war-making capacities. Liddell Hart found that "Bomber Command overestimated, and long continued to overestimate, the results and effects of ...strategic bombing attacks."

By mid-1942 the Battle of the Atlantic had reached its most critical stage and Nazi submarines threatened Britain and Russia's lifeline from North America. More than 150 German U-Boats, aided by other Axis subs, sank 1,160 ships totaling 6,266,000 tons in all waters during the year. With the British Navy desperate for help, Bomber Command was directed to give priority to attacks on submarine yards and their component factories, as well as to continue laying mines at sea. The new four-engine Lancaster heavy bombers were first tried out on a precision bombing target in Central Germany, but obtained only a partial success. German fighters struck the bombers over France and five out of twelve aircraft were destroyed, indicating that new enemy fighter tactics were being successful. But the English people were pleased that their country had developed the means to give the Germans just retaliations for the Luftwaffe's brutal attacks upon Britain's cities and, generally, support continued to grow for more and bigger bomber raids on Germany.

Soon the advanced elements of the United States Army Air Force began to arrive in England and "Bomber" Harris was delighted that the leaders of the US Eighth Air Force shared his belief that strategic bombing could win the war. That enabled him to developed a close working relationship with the Americans which resulted in their firm cooperation with the strategic bombing offensive until the war's end. Having experienced similar problems regarding priorities for new and better aircraft and the assignment of its aircraft for other purposes, the USAAF also had to struggle against efforts to give precedence to the Pacific over the war in Europe. By July 1942 the American B-17 Flying Fortress began to arrive in England and six weeks later the first American mission bombed the railheads at Rouen, France. But many of the American planes were diverted for the TORCH landings in North Africa, and by the end of the year, there were no more than a hundred US bombers in the United Kingdom. Consequently, adequate planes and trained crews were not available until January 1943 for their first daylight mission to Wilhelmshaven in Germany. Harris advised the Americans that the

British had found daylight operations to be too costly. However, the Americans insisted that their aircraft had been designed for, and the crews had been specially trained for, daylight flying. In fact, General Ira Eaker believed that, once he had an adequate number of Fortresses and Liberators, he could penetrate any part of Germany without fighter escorts, and that their precision bombing capability would place forty percent of their bombloads within five hundred yards of the targets. In that way, the "around-the-clock bombing" concept became the major strategy of the Allied air forces in the European War.

In September 1942, USAAF Commanding General H.H. Arnold's "Plans for Operation Against the Enemy" had recognized Germany over Japan as America's priority target and opposed what he considered to be the dissipation of America's airpower which was scattered in thirteen theaters of operation. He agreed with the Harris plan to concentrate British and US bombing against Germany's industrial power and he called for 3,000 US bombers to fulfill that mission. The initial accomplishments of the American air forces was substantial. It had not only mobilized effective air operations against the Japanese, but had built a rapidly growing force in the United Kingdom in less than a year with limited operations already underway against the enemy.

Meanwhile, aggressive initiatives by the Allied air forces against Germany forced the Luftwaffe to change its operations from the offensive to the defensive. At first, Hitler and Goering had refused to admit that the British and American bombing offensives were having any affect on Germany and no new defensive measures were taken. Their reaction had directed retaliatory raids on England, but as Allied attacks increased on Germany itself, they could no longer ignore the need to protect their industries and cities from further damage. Before the war, the "powerful" Luftwaffe had made the critical blunder of assuming that an offensive victory was certain and there would be no need to be on the defensive, so no night fighters were produced. By 1942, however, they had established night-flying fighter units, an enemy aircraft-locating radar interception system was developed, and the use of massed searchlights and anti-aircraft guns was greatly increased. By the beginning of 1943, Luftwaffe units were being withdrawn from the Eastern and Western fronts back to Germany where the air-defense system was greatly improved, strengthened and centralized under one command. However, the increased resistance of the enemy was seen by the RAF

and the AAAF as indications of the effectiveness of their raids. Therefore, they could assume that the enemy would have growing difficulty resisting the increasing and more powerful Allied aerial offensives against Germany.

By October 1942, most of the air attacks against Germany had been suspended while Bomber Command and USAAF resources supported the Allied invasion of North Africa and targets in Italy. But by the beginning of 1943, Germany's military positions in Russia and in the Mediterranean had begun to reverse, and the Allied bomber offensives were obtaining increasing success. The Americans, however, were having difficulties establishing an effective force in Britain. Harris informed Churchill that his American friends were discouraged over US air policies and progress, and asked him to intervene with Roosevelt. The Prime Minister must have done so because the situation soon changed. In any case, when Churchill and Roosevelt met at Casablanca in January 1943, the Combined Chiefs of Staff issued the following directive to the British and American Air Force commanders: "Your primary object will be the progressive destruction and dislocation of the German military, industrial and economic system and the undermining of the morale of the German people to a point where their capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened." Bombing priorities were assigned to submarine yards, transportation, aircraft industry, oil refineries and other war-industry targets.

During the latter part of 1942, Bomber Command had increased its heavy bomber force and the navigational improvements continued to expand its ability to locate more distant targets. Harris had given the superior Lancaster the maximum priority over the manufacture of the Stirling and Halifax aircraft, and by early 1943, the new night-flying directional equipment was being installed in all bombers. New techniques, such as the Pathfinder Force, would also vastly improve the accuracy of target-finding. And by March, the bomber force had been built-up to thirty-seven heavy squadrons plus fourteen twin-engine squadrons consisting of 960 first-line aircraft. It was a substantial achievement and Great Britain had, at last, acquired a powerful weapon against its enemy.

The American build-up in Britain had proceeded slowly with many aircraft and crews being assigned to the Mediterranean area. USAAF commanders had also learned that their daylight raids were highly vulnerable to German fighter attacks and large numbers of bombers were required to provide adequate

firepower and protection for daylight raids over Germany. They concluded that a total force of at least seven hundred bombers would be required in England to sustain raids of three hundred or more planes over Germany. Thus the "Combined Bombing Campaign," called for at the Casablanca conference, did not begin before the middle of the year. Then a new directive named POINTBLANK listed specific targets for the Eighth Air Force precision daylight-bombing to be aircraft, petroleum, and ball-bearing industries, while Bomber Command was directed to attack by night the cities in which such industries were located.

Soon Bomber Command began the new combined assaults with a 791 plane attack on Hamburg in July 1943, and although only Berlin was more heavily defended than Hamburg, the WINDOW strips of aluminum paper scattered in the air succeeded in confusing the enemy radar so that only twelve planes were lost. The fires set by the heavy raids burned for two days and up to fifteen hundred persons were killed. Over the next two days, the Americans struck Hamburg with 252 aircraft, but their light bomb-loads and inability to see the smoke-covered targets brought disappointing results. The next night the British raided again with 787 bombers and released twelve hundred tons of incendiaries. A firestorm resulted which sucked bodies and structures into a huge swirling inferno which seemed to consume the entire city. Thirteen square miles of Hamburg were obliterated, some 42,000 bodies were found, and many thousands were wounded and missing. Two more raids followed but were relatively mild compared to the firestorm. Other attacks continued against the Ruhr and other centers, and the Germans were so shocked by the ferocity and destruction of the massive attacks that Adolf Hitler vowed, "The day will come, maybe three hundred years from now, when we will be able to avenge ourselves."

Clearly, the British and American air attacks had hastened the Italian surrender on September 3, 1943 which provided new opportunities for Allied aircraft to strike Germany and her Axis partners from the south. The US Fifteenth Air Force was based in Italy, but the German daytime fighter tactics had greatly improved and the long Allied flights to Germany began to result in heavy casualties. Actually, the Luftwaffe had doubled its strength to sixteen hundred fighters to defend the Reich that prevented much of the Allied attacks against the production of German weapons and resources. Generally, with their

forces and efforts divided into several areas of activity, neither Bomber Command nor the USAAF had much success against the Luftwaffe over Germany in 1943. When the disastrous American daylight attacks on Regensburg and Schweinfurt were undertaken deep into Germany without escorts, 120 bombers with 600 of their crewmen were lost. At great cost, they had learned that daylight raids without escorts had become prohibitive and that Allied air superiority over Germany had been lost. Further daylight raids without escorts had to be suspended. Meanwhile, Bomber Command's sixteen attacks on Berlin, reportedly ordered by Churchill mainly to please Josef Stalin, resulted in such heavy losses of aircraft and crews that the strategic campaign had to be abandoned. But most fortuitously, by March 1943 the new American Mustang fighter made its first appearance and would quickly outclass every other fighter and completely change the air war over Europe. With its long range capability to escort B-17's all the way to and from their targets in Germany, the Allies would be able to gain final control of the skies over Germany itself.

Thus by mid-1944 the combined power of the British-American bomber forces had become awesome. Indeed, Bomber Command had 1,000 heavy bombers, the Eighth Air Force had 2,000, and the US Fifteenth Air Force had 1,200 in Italy. With a total of 4,200 heavy bombers, around-the-clock bombing could be undertaken with massive destructive effect upon numerous German industries and cities. The leaders of the Allied air offensives were convinced they had obtained the power and the ability to strike the enemy with acceptable losses, and bring about an end to the conflict. Meanwhile, in the United States top priority had been given to develop a special fighter plane to successfully defend the bombers to and from their targets, and by 1944 many of the renowned P-51B Mustang fighters became available. It was faster, more maneuverable, and with long-range auxiliary fuel tanks, it out-performed any plane in the sky at that time. At last, the Allies had acquired the means to fulfill the objectives which had been set for the combined air offensive against Germany. Furthermore, to defend Germany, large numbers of aircraft were withdrawn from the Eastern front which greatly advanced Soviet offensive successes.

By early 1944 POINTBLANK, aimed at the reduction of the enemy fighter force, had not been accomplished and the effectiveness of the strategic offensive had been delayed by the bombing interdiction of Normandy that had greatly

contributed to the success of the amphibious invasion. The good news was that by mid-1994 14,000 Mustangs had been produced and, with British Spitfires and Hurricanes, they had so successfully shot down the Luftwaffe planes throughout the West that the skies over the landing beaches were practically free of enemy planes. In fact, the author never saw an enemy plane over the Omaha Beach area throughout the Battle of Normandy. As it turned out, just as the Luftwaffe had begun to force Bomber Command to reduce its night operations, the USAAF greatly increased its daytime operations. And, after the invasion, when the British resumed nighttime operations, Germany's air defense was substantially reduced by lack of fuel and loss of radar warning systems in France. Area-bombing, however, was largely set aside as both the British and the Americans concentrated on oil targets. Many fuel plants were badly damaged and prevented much of Germany's air and armored power from being used on both the Western and the Eastern fronts. Soon enemy opposition in the air had weakened to the point where Bomber Command resumed daytime raids and found it to be more effective and less costly than night operations.

Thereafter, from October 1944 to the end of the war, Allied aircraft remained supreme over Germany and RAF's bombloads during the last three months of 1944 were three times the total delivered during the year of 1943. Bomber Command's history called it a time of "virtual operational omnipotence" as strategic bombing had begun to have its most damaging effect on Germany's war production. Still Bomber Command was criticized, on moral as well as operational grounds, for directing most of its effort for area-bombing instead of following directives to bomb targets with oil and transportation importance during the final phase of the war. Harris was not only charged with having caused unnecessary loss of life, he was also accused of having failed to shorten the war by not complying with a September 24, 1944 directive to concentrate on the destruction of oil facilities while the final American strategy was being aimed specifically at targets known to be essential to the enemy's war effort. But Arthur Harris refused to change his priorities and threatened to resign if forced to do so. The major controversy related to a directive given Harris on January 27, 1945 just before the Yalta Conference, directing him to resume area-bombing along with attacks on oil targets. That order resulted in the deliberate disaster against civilians and refugees at Dresden which had so repulsed people throughout the

world. It was also claimed that the policy of area bombing had been reinstated at Churchill's request as another effort to increase his leverage with the Soviets at the forthcoming Yalta Conference.

When Air Marshal Harris was subjected to much strong criticism, his critics were said to have been "too unbalanced and exaggerated" when they confused "advice with interference, criticism with sabotage and evidence with propaganda." But the critics continued to claim that he "resisted innovations," was "seldom open to persuasion," was too skeptical of the Air Staff, was "openly contemptuous of officers he served with, saw all issues in black and white, and expected authority commensurate with the powers he had assumed." In other words, they charged that he believed that since he had made Bomber Command to be what it was, he knew best how to operate it, and he thought he should be able to do so without interference.

Without question, the combined bombing offensives of Bomber Command and the Eighth and Fifteenth Air Forces successfully and substantially reduced German production in the last year of the war. According to German Minister of Armaments Albert Speer, all production was reduced by twenty percent during 1944. Rifle production, for example, was down by twenty-seven percent, tanks by fifty percent, aircraft by fifty-eight percent, and oil production dropped to almost zero by January 1945. In fact, there were so few targets left to be bombed that during the last two months of the war Bomber Command and the USAAF were used largely to assist the tactical operations of the ground forces. But the rate of loss to the British and the Americans had been appalling. In the six years from 1939 to war's end, of the 70,253 airmen who were killed or missing in the Royal Air Force, 47,268 (67 percent) were lost during Bomber Command's operations. In the three-year period from 1942 to mid-1945, Eighth Air Force losses were 24,288 killed and 18,699 missing and wounded. The consequences of the campaign continue to be widely questioned since it is undeniably doubtful that the effect of the bombings could justify such a huge sacrifice of men and aircraft.

In the final months of the war there were massive bomber raids throughout Germany. From the beginning of 1945 to the end of the war in Europe, with almost complete control of the skies over Germany and protected by the long-range fighter escorts, thirty-six major operations were flown by Bomber Command mostly at night. Over 17,000 tons of bombs were dropped on

German cities and, at the same time, many operations were undertaken in support of Allied ground and naval attacks. The final numbers for Bomber Command activities in 1945 involved 67,487 sorties with the loss of 608 aircraft. The USAAF was also highly active and the final targets for the "around-the-clock" bombing operations involved considerable more destruction of commercial installations, the interruption of the shipment of supplies to production facilities, and the movement of enemy troops within Germany.

After the German surrender, a United States Strategic Bombing Survey was undertaken to determine how the bombing campaign in Europe might be effectively used to advance the defeat of Japan. A major conclusion stated that the American bombing destruction "fell mostly on industries relatively inessential to the war effort." Harris contended that the conclusion was inappropriate and inaccurate since the American survey had been based on the destruction of one industry at the time. He also pointed out that most of the German industrial capacity had been located in large cities where the strategic attacks had destroyed or disrupted numerous industrial capacities. He referred to a Bomber Command survey which had found many discrepancies in the American survey, such as the US contention that thirty-one percent of the houses in Hamburg and twenty-two percent in Dusseldorf had been destroyed, whereas the British found that the correct percentage was sixty-one percent in Hamburg and fifty percent in Dusseldorf. He also said that Bomber Command had attacked seventy different German cities of which twenty-three were sixty percent destroyed and forty-six were fifty percent destroyed, adding that in the last year of the war "the whole German war machine" had been crippled with it's war production reduced by sixty percent to zero. Although the Yanks conceded that the destruction of the cities had been "really disastrous," Harris held that the American assessment of production loss had been flawed since it did not consider that up to 1.5 million people were transferred from productive jobs to repair air-raid damage.

The supporters of strategic bombing argued that if the final bombing capability had been available a year earlier for uninterrupted use against the enemy, the war would have ended without the necessity of a ground assault upon Germany itself. They believed it had been due to a lack of faith by Allied leaders which permitted the "older services" to consume much of the Allied resources on "older weapons" which failed to do the job. Even so, it was claimed, far more damage

could have been obtained during the last year of the war had more support and resources been allocated to Bomber Command. They also contended that the Americans had learned from the success of precision bombing in Europe and, by giving it the highest priority in the Pacific, had forced the Japanese to seek a surrender before the atom bombs were used. Aircraft designer A. P. de Seversky claimed that if the United States had given an earlier priority to the production of longer-ranged heavier bombers, they could have been used to avoid the high casualties of the "island-hopping" strategy and brought the war in the Pacific to an earlier end. Lastly, it was asserted that the extensive destruction of Japan's industrial capacities by the United States air forces was ample evidence of the justification for the policy of the strategic bombing offensives in Europe.

"Bomber" Harris thought that the capabilities for aerial bombing had been generally unappreciated and misunderstood by Allied military leaders throughout the war. During the crisis of the Battle of Britain, he said that it had been the attacks of Bomber Command on Hitler's preparations for the invasion of England, as well as the valiant resistance of Fighter Command, which convinced Hitler to call off the invasion since air superiority had not been obtained. Later, he also insisted that the bombing attacks on occupied France, Belgium and Holland had prevented Germany from developing the additional industrial resources which would have greatly strengthened its military strength against the Soviet Union, and he credited the aerial bombing interdiction of Normandy for the successful Allied assault on Fortress Europa. Equally important to the destruction of Germany's industrial production, he claimed, the strategic bombing offensive required the diversion of vast manpower, dual-purpose weapons, and aircraft which as Albert Speer said, "considerably weakened" Germany's armed resistance against both the Allies and the Soviets.

While Bomber Command boasted of having dropped 87,000 tons of bombs on Germany in the month of March 1945 alone, the factories of the Reich were still turning out, after six years of war, larger and superior tanks, new jet-propelled aircraft, new V-1 and V-2 missiles, and other traditional weapons in the greatest quantities of the entire war. And on both the Eastern and the Western fronts, German soldiers, believing that unconditional surrender meant "death or slavery at the hands of the Bolsheviks," were motivated to continue to fight until all of Germany had been overrun. Aside from the moral question involved, it was

argued that vast numbers of aircraft were used to attack targets in Germany which had no substantial military significance, thereby wasting essential manpower and materiel needed to help the Army and Navy obtain an earlier end of the conflict. There were serious questions, too, regarding the use of heavy bombings in advance of ground attacks especially by Montgomery in Normandy. Most often, such operations not only failed to strike and immobilize the enemy, but the enemy appeared not to have been greatly affected and even greater obstacles were created for the attacking forces to overcome.

In fact, throughout the war much more credit was given to the accuracy and the effectiveness of aircraft bombing than was justified by the results obtained. Air power, in World War II as in World War I, was considered to be the elite armed service both by military leaders and the general public on both sides of the conflict. However, after the war it became apparent that while the air force accomplishments had been generally highly important, and made an essential contribution to victory, there was never a realistic prospect that it possessed the possibility of forcing a surrender by the enemy. Critics of the policy believed that if the application of most of the aerial assets of both Great Britain and the United States had not been so blunderingly misused, unnecessary casualties among both the military and civilian populations would have been avoided. They also believed that if aerial bombing had not been so vastly over-sold, the war could have been greatly shortened with more aircraft available for the Battle of the Atlantic, in the Battle of Britain, for the war in the Pacific, in the North African campaign, and for general combat against the Luftwaffe in the air and against the Wehrmacht on the ground.

The three military services of the United States had operated separate air forces throughout World War II which they believed greatly helped them to attain their objectives. By 1945, for example, the United States Navy included 22,000 aircraft and 49,000 pilots. Even the Japanese Navy, the British point out, had more planes than the British Navy. Author Lee Kennett argues that RAF advocates greatly overestimated the potential of aerial bombing so that a greater psychological effect had been expected. They also had predicted that more damage would be obtained from the same bomb when dropped by air rather than if fired by artillery. However, Allied Air Forces failed to gain absolute supremacy over German skies until the war was almost over, and the policy of strategic

bombing proved to be one of the war's most costly means of battle in terms of aircrew casualties and loss of aircraft. Incredibly, three tons of bombs had to be delivered to take the life of one German and a ton and a half were required for each Japanese fatality!

The post-war official history of Bomber Command entitled *Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany* asserts that it's contribution to victory was decisive. The American record of the *Army Air Forces in World War II* also claimed a decisive role in association with a "larger" effort. It is clear that in both cases the Strategic Bombing Offensive made an extremely important and essential contribution to the Allied victory, but the claim that their role was more important than the tactical operations of the air arms of the traditional services in the destruction of enemy air forces and in support of the Allied armies and navies, has been strongly disputed. Nor can it substantiate the claim to have been of "decisive" influence in the winning of the war any more so than the Allied navies at sea and the Allied armies in the field since each played a vitally important and essential role in the Allied victory.

Strategic Bombing, as originated by the British, did bring about a timely and effective operational procedure for utilizing a new and powerful weapon against Germany's aggressive war-making capability. And precision bombing, as developed with considerable success by the Americans, resulted in much destruction of specific industries. Also, the attacks of the Eighth and Fifteenth Air Forces directed at oil and transportation facilities were particularly effective and, it is now apparent that had they been undertaken earlier, their effect would have been much greater. As for the general policy of area bombing, Nazi Production Chief Albert Speer said that the British damage had been more widespread and less effective since the German cities were generally able to absorb the punishment and to continue their lives and their productive work. In practice, it was learned that specific targets had to be bombed over and over again because they were either quickly repaired or substitute arrangements were made. Other than by photographs, there had been no way to gauge bombing effectiveness and, consequently, damage assumptions usually exceeded actual conditions.

But Lee Kennett reiterates that while one city after another was bombed in an increasing rain of terror, no target proved "so elusive as morale," and that generally the purpose of morale bombing had failed. Indeed, the individual

German citizen had no choice—it was either death or to go on living as best one could. In spite of the incredible terrors of war, it has been consistently proven that there is almost no limit to what a human being can bear, nor to what he will do, so long as there is some hope for life, freedom and survival. Nonetheless, the inconceivable terror and despair was demonstrated when one Berliner was quoted, "If anybody is still alive here it's his own fault; there were bombs enough for everybody." And Kennett, while remarking, "If there was a lesson to be read in the ruins of Berlin, Coventry and Hiroshima it was the terrible fragility of all man's works and treasures—and the tenacity and endurance of man himself," pointed out that strategic bombing was criticized both for its inefficiency and for its savagery.

At war's end, the British "Bomber Barons" were accused of having consistently lied and misrepresented the facts about the bomber offensive throughout the war, and that there had been a great cover-up by cabinet ministers and the media as well as by the Air Staff. It was said, "In some ways, area bombing was a three year period of deceit practiced on the British public." In the United States, it was argued that the "official policy against indiscriminate bombing was so badly interpreted and so frequently breached as to become almost meaningless." But Dudley Saward pointed out that those who had so strongly condemned the policy on morale grounds quickly forgot the murder of 6,000,000 Jews, and many millions of others, as well as "those whose numbers would have been far greater had the bomber offensive failed or never taken place." .

British historian Max Hastings asserts that the bombing campaign made an important, perhaps critical, contribution in 1941-42 by keeping up British morale and deterred the Americans from "a premature second front." But he questions the commitment of so much of Britain's limited resources to Bomber Command's assault on Germany's war-making production when only America had the industrial capacity to obtain "decisive results within an acceptable period." He adds that it was clear by the spring of 1944 that Harris' area bombing had failed and he blames RAF Air Marshal Charles Portal for his "indecision and weakness in handling Harris." Finally, Hastings concludes that the Americans achieved the two greatest accomplishments of the strategic air offensive with the defeat of the Luftwaffe by the P-51 Mustang escort-fighters, and the precision-bombing of the German's oil resources. According to Luftwaffe Field

Marshal Erhard Milch, "The British inflicted grievous and bloody injuries upon us but the Americans stabbed us in the heart."

Albert Speer had been astonished by the "inconsistency" of the British-American air attacks. He told Hastings that the area bombing had been pointless and had achieved "no important effect" on Germany's war production as of early 1944. Also, that it was surprising that the Allies had not gone after the Reich's synthetic oil plants prior to 1944, and that once the Americans began to bomb those facilities, due to the inconsistencies of their campaign, they waited six months before resuming the attacks. But Samuel Mitcham claims that the American pin-point daylight raids against the German fuel installations were only "slightly less successful" than the Normandy interdiction operations against the French railway system. Just before the invasion, Mitcham also said, German production of fuel had been reduced from 5,850 metric tons to 4,820 per day, that obviously fuel production was Germany's most vulnerable spot, and that the Allies had blundered badly by not having concentrated more of its strategic bombing against it.

In America there had been strong initial opposition to the bombing of civilian populations by the United States Air Force. Once it had begun, as its opponents stressed, those that were doing the bombing had no reliable way of knowing its effect upon those who were being bombed, so that the escalation proceeded largely without restraint. Others asserted that due to unconfirmed claims that the bombings were being very successful towards forcing the enemy to end the war, the public in both Britain and the United States were not greatly concerned about the absence of facts on the results of the operations. Actually, the public mood was generally one of angry revenge, believing that the "barbarian Germans" deserved as much "retaliatory terror" as could be brought upon them, and the more German lives that were lost the better. That left little public protest anywhere about the policy during the war. Mainly, the British and American people cared mostly about winning the war and getting it over with as soon as possible, so they were inclined to believe almost anything that might end the war sooner.

But finally, the "merciless ferocity" of the attacks on historic Dresden by Bomber Command and the 8th Air Force that obliterated the city killing between 40,000 and 100,000 people, and caused 350,000 persons to be homeless, aroused widespread public outrage. Even Winston Churchill, a

persistent advocate of area bombing, called for a review of a policy being used "simply for the sake of increasing terror." The Americans were particularly incensed since they had "steadfastly preached the gospel of precision bombing against military and industrial targets." In Britain it was apparent that the assault on Dresden had gone too far and public opposition against area bombing greatly increased. After the war, when it was found that the military and industrial significance of Dresden had not justified the great loss of life, public reaction against Bomber Command developed to the extent that Arthur Harris and the men of Bomber Command were passed over in the presentations of commendation that were widely distributed to the RAF for heroic and meritorious service to the Empire.

Harris, as the originator of the concept of the Strategic Bombing Offensive in World War II and who largely directed the policies and operations of Bomber Command, together with the thousands of young men who valiantly fought the bomber campaigns, were the subjects of "gross ingratitude" by the postwar Labor Government, according to bomber offensive supporters. Furthermore, it was charged that the Government bombing survey report covered up the importance of Bomber Command to the war effort, and that the American bombing survey barely mentioned the role of Bomber Command, all of which was seen as a deliberate effort to ignore the "historic and essential" role of strategic bombing in winning the war. Once Churchill had regained the office of Prime Minister, attempts were made to resurrect public appreciation for Harris and Bomber Command, and after being subjected to "atrocious treatment," finally in 1953 Harris received a baronetcy and was praised for having been one of Britain's greatest military commanders.

However, the official history of Bomber Command challenged Harris's concept of strategic bombing, the manner in which it was employed, and held that much of its operations could not be justified. Others claimed that the study was politically influenced and that the Bomber Commander was not consulted, nor was he allowed to contribute to the report. The dispute still continues but most observers agree that the bombing campaign successfully disrupted and destroyed much of Germany's industrial capacity and prevented an even greater production of war resources. Still, they continue to condemn the indiscriminate area bombing as an unforgivable blunder and that it was "inexcusably barbaric

conduct" against the established principles of warfare that failed to accomplish its objectives.

In the United States the same attitude of revenge by "giving the enemy everything we've got and damn the consequences" undoubtedly encouraged Franklin Roosevelt to insist on his policy of "unconditional surrender," and ultimately, led to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki even after the United States knew that Japan was attempting to negotiate a surrender. The revengeful "eye-for-an-eye" mentality was said to have resulted in destroying much of the moral purpose for which the war was fought. Indeed, it was claimed that the conscience of many Britons and Americans was irreparably damaged by the realization that thousands upon thousands of human beings had been killed and maimed by brutally barbaric acts of warfare that had been indiscriminately perpetrated against their enemies throughout much of World War II by their "Christian" democracy opponents.

After the war, it was estimated that 593,000 civilians were killed and 3,370,000 dwellings were destroyed by Allied bombing attacks on Germany from 1939 to 1945. Consequently, the Germans claimed that the "terror attacks" of the Allies against their cities and the German people was a criminal offense which should have been brought before the Nuremberg trials. They argued that the tragic death, devastation, and suffering caused by the "illegal and immoral attacks" against the civilian population of Germany had been ignored in both British and American reports and historical accounts of the conflict. They also disputed the claim that the bombing war was started as a mistake by the Luftwaffe during the Battle of Britain. Lastly, they contend that both sides blundered by risking offensive actions against each other without having first considered the logical consequence of the brutal destruction which would inevitably follow, and once begun, lead to the indiscriminate bombing which would not end until one or the other was destroyed.

But those who speak for the millions of people of many countries who lost their relatives, friends and countrymen and endured horrific suffering from the terror of the German assaults; for the millions of soldiers, sailors and airmen of many nations who fought against the brutal Nazi aggressions that were responsible for World War II; for the survivors and relatives of the six million Jews who were murdered by the Germans; and for the fifty million or more human beings

whose death was caused by the Germans in World War II, all are in agreement that the Germans deserved everything they got, and more!

Finally, since the Germans had initiated the massive terror of aerial bombing attacks against Poland, France and Britain in the early stages of World War II, it was to be expected that the recipients would retaliate to the utmost degree of their opportunity and capacity. In the case of Great Britain, the response was as incredibly effective as it was completely astounding. That such a small country could find the will and the means to produce the resources and the abilities to enable them to so quickly change their status from "hopeless defender to aggressive contender," was one of the most remarkable achievements of World War II. The courageous and valiant Royal Air Force, as well as the British people, not only had miraculously defended Britain against a vastly superior airpower, but in a relatively short time the combined air forces of Great Britain and the United States had with superb bravery and great sacrifice reversed the conflict by having successfully created much havoc and destruction in the heartland of the enemy. Certainly, it was one of the most important Allied contributions to the winning of World War II.

Chapter 7

Unconditional Surrender

The policy of "Unconditional Surrender," as pronounced by President Franklin Roosevelt at the Casablanca Conference on January 24, 1943, was the most controversial political issue of World War II. Moreover, no Allied policy has been more widely criticized by historians and military leaders, as well as Hitler's opponents in Germany, who generally considered it to have been responsible for the most calamitous consequences of the war. The critics of Roosevelt's conduct of American interests in the worldwide conflict contend that it was the greatest mistake of the war which unnecessarily prolonged the surrender and led to great and unnecessary suffering, death and destruction both during and after the war. On the other hand, the wartime President's defenders claim that the principles of unconditional surrender were correctly based on the American perception of Germany, the traditional American view of the relation between politics and the conduct of military affairs, the prevailing attitude toward the consequences of World War I, the need to motivate Allied persecution of the conflict, and the necessity for maintaining the "Grand Alliance" with the Soviet Union for total victory over Germany and Japan.

When Roosevelt first announced the formula at Casablanca he represented it as being his spontaneous and original policy. This was not true for the policy had been under consideration for some time in both Washington and London. However, neither the Americans nor the British had any idea that the President would launch such a new and important policy without inter-Allied consultation or that he would attempt to take full credit for it. He had waited until the end of the Conference and then suddenly announced that:

> The President and the Prime Minister...are more than ever determined that peace can come to the world only by a total elimination of

> German and Japanese war power. This involves the simple formula of placing the objective of this war in terms of unconditional surrender by Germany, Italy and Japan. Unconditional surrender by them means a reasonable assurance of world peace, for generations. Unconditional surrender means not the destruction of the German populace, nor of the Italian or Japanese populace but does mean the destruction of a philosophy in Germany, Italy and Japan which is based on the conquest and subjugation of other peoples.

The announcement not only came as a surprise to both the American and British delegations, but to Winston Churchill as well, who had been aware that the Americans had considered the policy but believed that Roosevelt had dropped the matter. So the Prime Minister was left with no choice but to go along with the President for unity's sake, but subsequently Churchill's various statements on the issue indicated his lack of enthusiasm, if not disapproval, of the policy. Even Roosevelt's son Elliott reported that he had been led to believe that his father had originated the theme and that the President thought that "Uncle Joe" Stalin would love it.

Long before the United States entered the war, Franklin Roosevelt had rightly decided that America had no choice but to join with Great Britain as a partner in its desperate fight against "totalitarian aggression." His speeches strongly supported Britain's valiant struggle against the "powerful and resourceful gangsters (who) have banded together to make war upon the whole human race." Then, after America had entered the war, he was determined to unify the American people in support of the total defeat of the Axis powers, to overthrow their totalitarian regimes, to liberate their territorial conquests, to establish free and democratic governments, and to gain a total victory upon which world peace could be founded. The President's campaign was described as having invoked the beliefs and the emotional reaction of the simplistic "good guy-bad guy" attitude that would continue its moralistic influence on American policies until the war was brought to a victorious end.

While the President would remain stubbornly faithful to his personal concept of the Allied policy on surrender to the end of his life, on his return from Casablanca he attempted to justify his position to the American people by adding that it meant "no harm to the common people of the Axis nations. But

we do mean to impose punishment and retribution in full upon their guilty, barbaric leaders." But that was as far as he would go toward meeting the many requests for modification of the policy. Churchill attempted to explain that "it does not mean...that we are to stain our victorious arms by inhumanity or by a lust for mere vengeance," or that "all branches of the human family" could not look forward to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." While there are many indications that the Prime Minister did not agree with the President on the issue, as on other policies, Churchill was never able to forget that Britain's very survival was dependent upon the continued support of the United States.

Franklin Roosevelt was acknowledged to be a master of political rhetoric, however, his biographer James MacGregor Burns considered him to be "less a great creative leader than a skillful manipulator and a brilliant interpreter." Admirably, FDR had set his sight upon the greatest of ideals—the quest for world peace and he had convinced himself, in that typical idealistic American way, that under his leadership the United States would right the wrongs of the past, correct the failures of the First World War, and would attain man's historic dream of future world peace. He seemed not to understand, as President Wilson had failed to comprehend, that Americans tend to see the world as they think it should be, whereas Europeans, not so idealistic and naive, believe that in politics as in war, it is reality that first must be dealt with.

Thus it was Franklin D. Roosevelt who determined the major Allied policy in World War II, a policy which committed the United States, Britain and Russia to the complete annihilation of their enemies by the policy of unconditional surrender. Unfortunately for the future of mankind, little thought was given to the validity of the formula, the way in which it was to be applied, its effect upon the war, its consequences after the war, and its influence on world peace. As politicians often do, it had begun largely as a propaganda slogan adopted by Roosevelt without consultation with his top diplomatic, military, and psychological warfare experts who clearly would have informed him as to the consequences of his questionable policy. According to Captain Russell Grenfell, "Unfortunately, once involved in a war, democratic politicians tend to get carried away by idealistic rhetoric which turns them into champions of humanity and world reformers. World reform is, however, the worst of all objects to be sought by war. For major war never makes the world better but always worse."

The fact is that Roosevelt went to great lengths to avoid advice and opposition to his policy of unconditional surrender. He did not discuss it with the Secretary of State, Secretary of War, nor with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Not only did he refuse to take Secretary of State Cordell Hull to Casablanca, who opposed the policy, but he requested that Churchill leave Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden at home as well. Obviously, he did not inform Churchill of his intention to announce the policy at Casablanca because he wanted to avoid the possibility of any opposition by the British. It is believed that since the Allies had been charged with making deals with the French in North Africa just before the Casablanca Conference, Roosevelt took that occasion to announce his policy so that the Germans could not claim that they had not been defeated and had been victimized by false promises as they claimed after World War I. Furthermore, it is likely he wanted to make it clear to the British and the Russians, as well as the American people, that no deals would be made with the Fascists in Germany, Italy or Japan.

But critics of the President's conduct of American policy in the war condemn him for having paid little attention to his foreign policy advisors and for making the greatest blunder of the war in causing the Allies to be committed to the total defeat, rather than the surrender of the enemy. They also blame him for failing to accept the axiom that military tactics and political strategy should never be separate considerations in war. The fact is that both Churchill and Stalin fully understood and practiced the Clausewitzian theory that war is the continuation of policy by other means, and that they both had serious reservations about the principle of unconditional surrender as Allied policy.

Roosevelt advisor Rexford Tugwell predicted that unconditional surrender would be regarded as the "most serious political error of the war." James Burns believed that "Roosevelt's utter concentration on the task at hand—winning the war—raised difficulties," just as had his determination to win elections at whatever cost during his peacetime years. Pointing out that FDR suffered from the "vice of immediacy," and that his "sharpest indictment" on that point was unconditional surrender, Burns also writes that it had been "ably argued" that the policy hardened enemy resistance, weakened opposition, prolonged the war, and caused "unnecessary loss and bloodshed." Unfortunately for many disastrous consequences of the war, Roosevelt believed it would be necessary to destroy

Germany and Japan in order to build world peace. In fact, at Versailles it had been a similar attitude among the victors of World War I which forced economic and military impotence on Germany, destroyed the prospect for peace, and created the economic chaos which gave birth to Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime.

A postwar research study by the Rand Corporation on American surrender policies in World War II concludes that the consequences of "unconditional surrender" should have been anticipated since total defeat cannot be a surrender. Total defeat destroys the enemy and creates a political vacuum since no conditions are called for, nor accepted, and no negotiations take place. And, the study concluded that Roosevelt's policy of unconditional surrender in World War II guaranteed the creation of a political vacuum in Central Europe which, because of the Western Allies' commitment to democratic ideals, could only be filled with Soviet Communist expansion.

The attitudes which led to the development of the policy and its acceptance, while originating with Roosevelt, were influenced by a number of other factors. Owing to their common historical background, the Americans and particularly their President, had a basic distrust of British diplomacy and imperialism which caused them to believe that the British wanted the war effort to be concentrated in the Mediterranean area so as to maintain the lifeline to the their empire while leaving the United States alone to fight the war in the Pacific. Regarding coalition warfare, the British considered the Americans to be "enthusiastic, but inexperienced" allies, and that their partners were more interested in getting into action with "the fustest with the mostest" than in winning the war. They also thought the Yanks were too "fresh, eager and naive," while the Americans believed the military and political objectives of the British were "self-serving and outmoded." Their differences in attitude and tradition required endless meetings, discussions and compromises over several years to develop and advance the common cause in policy and action. As someone has said, "The only thing worse than fighting a war is fighting a war with allies."

The dominant attitude of the American people towards the war was much the same in World War II as it had been in World War I. They generally believed with Roosevelt that the war was caused by militarists in Germany and that if the world was not to be dominated by Hitler and the Nazis, the capability of Germany, Italy and Japan to make aggressive war had to be destroyed in order to

build an effective world peace. Thereby, it became a moral war with but one objective—the total defeat of the enemy. And Roosevelt exploited this attitude into what became sheer emotionalism propaganda which, unfortunately, became the major Allied policy in the war—unconditional surrender.

More objective leadership concerning German militarism and aggression would have moderated American attitudes had propaganda not been the principal influence on policy. The Franco-Prussian War of 1870 had been declared by France, not by Germany, and both the United States and Great Britain considered Bismarck's efforts to unify his country to be justified. The conflict in World War I resulted from many causes and the sole blame should not have been placed on Germany. As for World War II, the Treaty of Versailles was its major cause and had the French, and to a lesser degree, the British not been blinded by emotional vengeance towards Germany, such chaotic conditions would not have existed which enabled Adolf Hitler to takeover Germany. And not until after he had illegally seized power had it become evident that Hitler's evil and brutal Nazi regime could only be ended by superior external military force.

Author Anne Armstrong charged that it was Franklin D. Roosevelt, and he alone, who one year before the Casablanca meeting committed the United States to the principle of total victory without compromise with the enemy—the policy of unconditional surrender. She claims it was the President who declared a moral war against Germany and Japan by saying that the United States could accept only "victory, final and complete," and she points out that from that time onward, Roosevelt's speeches concentrated on the theme of total war, the total destruction of the enemy's ability to make future wars, and the necessity for the trial of war criminals after the war. Roosevelt, she alleges, advanced constantly and consistently, with almost religious fervor, his concept of moral warfare including the destruction of the many evil practices of Fascist aggression, destruction and enslavement. Rexford Tugwell reported that "Franklin was severely criticized, and there were indignant assertions among liberals particularly, that revenge and punishment were poor beginnings of work for peace." As it had become apparent that the blunders of Versailles would be repeated, propaganda had become policy with disastrous consequences for the conduct of the war.

Once the war had begun, British studies on postwar policy were far more moderate and realistic about the future balance of power in Europe. Recognizing

Germany's industrial and military importance on the continent, they recommended that national policy should include the overthrow of Hitler's government, dissolution of the German Army, punishment of war criminals, disarmament inspections, maintenance of a healthy German postwar economy, encouragement of German participation in international associations, conversion of their armaments industry to consumer goods, regulation of the cartels and monopolies, and promotion of close cooperation with the United States and European countries on economic affairs. In other words, they realized the necessity for the restoration of Germany as a cooperative and productive member of the European community. Obviously, the British had not forgotten, or overlooked, the vital lesson of Versailles.

Well in advance of the Casablanca Conference, the American formulation of the unconditional surrender policy actually began with a Subcommittee at the State Department which recommended to the President that: "On the assumption that the victory of the United Nations will be conclusive, unconditional surrender rather than an armistice should be sought from the principal enemy states except perhaps Italy." The subcommittee majority opinion held that World War II had occurred because Germany had not been forced to surrender unconditionally in World War I which enabled the German people to be convinced by Adolf Hitler that they had been betrayed. But an enormous blunder was made by Roosevelt's friend Norman Davis, chairman of the subcommittee, when he failed to make it clear to the President that only the total surrender of the enemy's armed forces was intended by the subcommittee. Otherwise, it would have been obviously impossible to obtain the agreement of twenty plus Allies concerning the terms of a political surrender.

Cordell Hull, Roosevelt's Secretary of State, and Henry Stimson, the Secretary of War, were strongly opposed to Roosevelt's tough policy, believing it would strengthen enemy resistance and prolong the war. The President, however, stubbornly held that the policy represented his attitude and informed the Joint Chiefs of Staff that he intended to support unconditional surrender as a major war aim of the Allies. According to historian Herbert Feis, FDR probably also informed the Chiefs that he would discuss the policy with the British, and that the Western Allies would jointly reassure the Russians of their intention to see the war to its end only on a basis of the unconditional surrender of Germany and Japan.

Prime Minister Churchill reported that on January 20, 1943 he signaled the War Office from Casablanca advising them that a declaration would be issued "to continue the war relentlessly until we have brought about the 'unconditional surrender' of Germany and Japan." There was no objection from London, the matter was dropped, and apparently, was not discussed again by Roosevelt and Churchill. In fact, the comment of the official British history of the war regarding the policy states:

> It must be noted that at Casablanca the question as to whether it would soften the enemy will to resist or stiffen it does not appear to have been seriously considered at all. Neither experts in political warfare nor specialists in Axis internal affairs were present. Nor were the officials in Washington and London who were already drafting plans for the settlement of the postwar world. No representatives of the Foreign Office or the State Department were invited to give an assessment of the policy in the wider context of international relations—particularly in the context of future relations with the Soviet Union.

The German reaction to the announcement was immediate and Propaganda Minister Josef Goebbels lost no time in making the most of the Allied demand for unconditional surrender. It gave the Nazis, whose armies were having more difficult times in Russia, a much-needed powerful and persuasive propaganda boost and they immediately launched a national campaign claiming that the so-called principles of peace proclaimed in the Atlantic Charter had been repudiated by the Allies. That meant, they said, that it was the clear intention of the enemy to continue the struggle until Germany and the German people had been totally destroyed by "godless Bolshevism."

President Roosevelt and his advisors had believed that it was highly important to calm Russian fears that the capitalist nations, of which Germany had traditionally been a part, might effect a separate peace with Germany. Accordingly, FDR was convinced that "Uncle Joe" Stalin would think that his unconditional surrender was "just the thing." Robert Sherwood reported that the Soviet Leader questioned the advisability of using the term without definition and felt that it merely unified the German people. Stalin also believed it was bad tactics and wanted to draw up specific conditions to inform the Germans as to what they were so as to hasten their capitulation. But, like Churchill, he went along with it

to please Roosevelt. The Russians, however, never demonstrated any support for the policy until Roosevelt placed it in the final statement of unity in the Declaration of Yalta a few months before the war ended.

Meanwhile, Roosevelt did not know that Stalin had already secretly tried to make peace with the Nazis "at almost any price." Two 1993 Soviet publications reveal that shortly after the German invasion of Russia, the Communist dictator attempted to make another deal with Adolf Hitler by offering him permanent possession of Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and western Ukraine, but Hitler refused. After Roosevelt's declaration of unconditional surrender, the Soviet Marshal issued statements which attempted to turn the German people against the Nazi regime by saying that the Russians had no intention of destroying the German nation. Even after winning the Battle of Stalingrad, the turning point in the war between Germany and Russia, Stalin quickly branded as a "lie" the charge that the Russians were determined to exterminate the German people. As late as November 1943, after the German armies had been forced on the defensive, he called for the Germans to throw Hitler out and to end the war. While refusing to modify or even define the meaning of unconditional surrender, which would have at least weakened German resistance and hastened the end of the war, Roosevelt continued to forbid American encouragement of, and contact with, anti-Hitler forces in Germany. At the same time, Stalin was actively pursuing every effort to turn the German people against the Nazis and to end the war which could only have occurred after the negotiation of an armistice and an agreement on the terms of peace.

As a tragic consequence of Roosevelt's determination to avoid anything which might suggest to the Russians the possibility of a separate peace in the West, opposition leaders in Germany concluded that since the Americans and the British were discouraging their plots against Hitler with repeated demands for unconditional surrender, they should try to do business with Russia. Stalin encouraged such attitudes by having captured German officers issue calls for the surrender of German soldiers, conducting reindoctrination programs for captured Germans, organizing "Free Germany" Committees, and by having German officers broadcast from Moscow calling on German troops to hold the line in the west while surrendering to Russia in the east so as to prevent the domination of Europe by the British and the Americans. Incredibly at cross purposes, while

Roosevelt was maintaining his rigid demands for unconditional surrender based on his determination to maintain solidarity with the Soviets, the Soviets were broadcasting to the Germans: "Our aim is: a free Germany…For people and for Fatherland. Against Hitler's war. For immediate peace. For the salvation of the German people." Meanwhile, the naive American President continued his inflexible and simplistic commitment to postwar international cooperation with the Soviets in the misled belief that it should take precedence over the traditional reliance on off-setting levels of power as the most practical means of preserving peace and security. Particularly, there was no excuse for any doubt about the commitment of a Soviet dictator to the principle that military tactics and political strategy are inseparable in war. As history would prove, he would make the most of it.

Unknown to the West, the actual Soviet postwar plan for Germany included military occupation, political dismemberment, annexation to the Soviet sphere of domination, economic reparations, imprisonment, forced labor, starvation, and executions. Their propaganda, however, unlike that of the Allies, was aimed at weakening resistance and doing everything possible to create division among the Germans. In sharp contrast, the Western powers consistently called for total war and the annihilation of Germany, a course that could only force the Germans into bitter resistance to the end while much of Germany was destroyed. As Armstrong writes, "The Soviet Union missed no opportunity to exploit the anti-Nazi resistance as a weapon in their effort to destroy Nazi Germany and to bring Communism to Central Europe."

Churchill attributed the end of hostilities slogan to Franklin Roosevelt, and although the British leader made conflicting statements on the subject, he stuck with the President nonetheless, as he did on almost all other major issues, in loyalty and gratitude to a friend who did not always return similar support. The Prime Minister did, however, try to qualify the policy in spite of Roosevelt's refusal to permit any modification or definition of the formula. But by that time, its propaganda use by the Nazis had done its damage and little could be said afterwards to soften its effect. In spite of what might later be said, the German people were convinced that the American-British-Soviet major objective involved their unconditional surrender, the occupation of Germany by Soviet Communism, and the death or enslavement of all the German people. During

the Battle of Normandy, when German prisoners were unloading huge wooden cases for our 1602nd Engineer Map Depot, they could not understand "Why the Americans are helping the Communists to fight Germany?"

In many ways, the American and British attitudes towards unconditional surrender were indicative of their respective attitudes towards the war in general. The Americans wanted to get it over with and to bring their troops home as soon as possible. The British were very much aware, from their long colonial tradition, that military actions were taken for political purposes. As Lord Maurice Hanken had found, in the previous fifteen wars in which Britain had been involved, unconditional surrender had never been an objective of the conflicts. The major difference between the Western partners on the issue arose during their highly controversial dispute over the Allied invasion of Europe. At stake was the coalition's major disagreement regarding military strategy versus political considerations. The Americans sought to apply the maximum power by the shortest route to Berlin as the quickest means to end the war. The British, however, argued that the attack should be made through the Mediterranean area which would provide a less costly and quicker access to Germany, and would deny the occupation of East Europe by Soviet Communism.

In his postwar account of the war, Churchill refused to dispute Roosevelt's conditions for surrender and disagreed that it had been "one of the greatest mistakes of Anglo-American war policy." The Prime Minister claimed that it had not prolonged the war, saying that: "Negotiation with Hitler was impossible. He was a maniac with supreme power to play his hand out to the end, which he did; and so did we." Churchill also contended that it would have been a mistake to attempt to state the conditions of peace terms, stressing that public opinion would have made it necessary to specify even worse terms to the Germans, and said that several attempts were made to compose such a statement without success. Yet Herbert Feis found that privately Churchill was distressed that American propaganda continued to emphasize "the demand for 'unconditional surrender' rather than the tolerance which might have been shown to those who submitted." The general British war aim had been to insure that no one power acquired a position of dominance on the continent and Churchill was determined to prevent Soviet Communism from filling the vacuum in Central Europe. Instead, he had vigorously argued for the British Mediterranean strategy

and argued that the capture of Berlin by the West was a major political objective of the war. But, the opposition of the American President and FDR's consistent cooperation with the leader of the Soviet Union prevented the success of Churchill's efforts.

The implementation of the total defeat policy also had an immediate and changing effect upon almost every aspect of World War II. An analysis of its influence on the German population and armed forces, on the conduct of the war by the Allies, as well as the anti-Nazi resistance in Germany, indicates that the policy had the most fateful influence on the outcome of the worldwide struggle. Its greatest effect was upon the people and the soldiers of Germany who had been convinced by the Nazis that the Americans and the British had turned their fate over to the dreaded Soviets, so in spite of disastrous military defeats and the bombing devastation of Germany, they preferred national suicide before submitting to Communist slavery. Particularly, after the terrible defeat at Stalingrad when it was generally known that the war was lost, most Germans would have obviously chosen an end to the bombing and killing had they believed the choice was anything other than slaughter and revenge under the Bolsheviks. Unconditional surrender, they believed, gave them no alternative but to continue to resist to the final end. The general attitude was evidenced by the many desperate stands against hopeless odds of the German armed forces as well as the fact that, in spite of the war's heaviest Allied bombing, the highest civilian production of the war was obtained in the final months of the collapse of resistance.

When the conflict finally and mercifully ended, the German generals agreed that unconditional surrender had prevented the war from ending earlier, caused unnecessary additional loss of life, increased great destruction throughout Europe, and created disastrous political effects for much of the world. During the war they firmly believed that the Allies were determined to destroy Germany completely knowing the vacuum would be filled by the Bolsheviks. The American President was accused of being "the gravedigger not only of Germany but also of Europe," and they claimed that the world would pay the price for Roosevelt's concessions to the Russians. It was emphatically stressed that the German soldier was given no choice but to fight to the last man against the total destruction of the German people, and the generals believed it would have been useless to risk their lives against Hitler in attempts to end the war when Germany

would be destroyed in any event. Hasso von Manteuffel, one of Germany's most respected generals, said that the Allied persistent demand for unconditional surrender "reinforced the will of the German people to fight to the bitter end." Most of the German generals believed that unconditional surrender was the major mistake of the war. They were convinced that the policy eliminated any possibility of a compromise to end the war and left soldiers and civilians no alternative but to die defending their homeland from total desecration by the Soviets.

Obviously, the policy was of great help to the Nazi for it was a simple and effective term which everyone could easily understand. "Total Slavery" meant the destruction of Germany and the bondage of the German people. The Nazis were delighted that the Allies had left the German people no choice but the total support of the Reich's war goals. The more the Allies demanded unconditional surrender, the more the Germans desperately worked and fought while the repeated propaganda of Goebbels convinced them that the same forces responsible for the infamous conditions of the Treaty of Versailles, were demanding Germany's total defeat. The Nazi's highly successful use of the threat, and others such as the Roosevelt endorsed Morgenthau plan calling for the reduction of Germany to a "pastoral society," the imposition of reparations, the horrors of occupation and dismemberment, were all effectively used to keep the people resisting until the awesome end. It also enabled their Fuehrer to confirm his final demonic warning that "there can be no compromise, there can only be victory or destruction." Inevitably, unconditional surrender enabled Hitler to fulfill his purpose of forcing the German people to accept the self-destruction to which the Nazis themselves had no alternative. It gave the Germans soldiers and people no way out but to join Hitler's pact for national suicide.

The effect of the policy on the military actions of the Allies was also substantial. Supreme Commander Dwight Eisenhower and his Chief of Staff Bedell Smith both felt strongly that the policy was wrong. They found that it improved the morale of the German forces, in spite of heavy losses, and they believed that unless the formula was modified, it would cause the Germans to stand and fight to the death. The Allies needed, they thought, to make it clear that the Germans would not be annihilated otherwise Allied troops would meet unnecessarily desperate resistance with heavy casualties until Germany was completely destroyed. But they were advised by the State Department that, "This question has been

raised three times with the President and...he has not been willing to authorize any step in the direction of redefining or interpreting unconditional surrender."

General Eisenhower, however, continued to push for modification, saying that the Germans showed no sign of "cracking" and that victory in Europe was being prolonged by the Germans' bitter resistance. He wanted to assure the Germans of law, order and political justice to encourage them to depose Hitler rather than incur the destruction of their homeland. Ike hoped that a statement could be issued after the Normandy invasion which would include general conditions for surrender with a demand for an end to the war. He knew the German Army would probably be in great disarray from strong political repercussions in Germany, and that proved to be the case. When Secretary Hull raised the question with Roosevelt, the President said he doubted the Russians would agree and that, without Russian agreement, the statement would be ineffective. Eisenhower even attempted to draft an appropriate statement which General George Marshall passed on to Roosevelt, but Ike was informed that the President "did not want the subject to be further considered without his approval."

Stephen Ambrose writes that Eisenhower felt strongly, not only about the policy of unconditional surrender, but also about the way in which Germany should be militarily occupied. He felt the President was making serious mistakes and, in spite of his belief that generals should not get involved in the political conduct of the war, he spoke to Roosevelt about his convictions which irritated the President. So the Supreme Commander got nowhere with his efforts to change the policy. Ambrose adds that, "The unconditional surrender policy guaranteed that when the war ended there should be a vacuum in Central Europe. The Red Army, growing stronger every day, would certainly, it seemed, flow into that vacuum. The smaller European nations, all defeated by Germany, could not exist."

Roosevelt's and Churchill's positions as President and Prime Minister, of course, limited comments during the war by other Allied military leaders on the effect the surrender policy would have on the conduct of military operations. Their postwar statements, however, critically questioned the adoption of the formula and its influence on the outcome of the war. Admiral William D. Leahy, as naval advisor to the President, disclosed that he was concerned that "its execution might add to our difficulties in succeeding campaigns because it would mean that we would have to destroy the enemy." General John R. Deane, Roosevelt's

military representative at Moscow, believed that it strengthened propaganda for the fight to the bitter end and that the Soviets probably agreed to the policy because a destroyed Germany would facilitate their postwar expansion. The United States Army Chief of Military History records that:

> After the defeats of the summer of 1944, the remaining German war potential was so seriously reduced that Hitler might have concluded that he no longer could win the war and should seek an armistice. Germany's allies...had undertaken, late in 1943, to induce Hitler to seek an agreement with the Soviet Union...Late in 1943, Hitler himself is reported to have sounded out the Western Allies for the definition of the unconditional surrender formula. But Allied insistence upon these terms before and after the July 20, 1944 plot all but ruled out the possibility of ending the war by negotiations...Unconditional surrender would have been difficult even for a German democratic government after a successful overthrow of Hitler's dictatorship.

The West Point Military History Series summarizes the consequences of Roosevelt's unexpected Casablanca announcement of unconditional surrender by pointing out that not only had the British not approved such a policy, but that neither the American Chiefs of Staff nor Winston Churchill had realized that they were actually sacrificing any hope of maintaining future peace in Europe by the traditional balance-of-powers in order to win the war "American-style." While the Series also cites Clausewitz' theory that the principal purpose of war is for the establishment of a better peace, it recognizes that Hitler's reactions to peace initiatives remains uncertain and speculative.

British military historian J.F.C. Fuller declared that the Allied policy of unconditional surrender deliberately prevented the Germans from surrendering and meant only victory or annihilation to every German. Many political as well as military leaders, both American and British, called for the clarification of the policy during the war, claiming that it had served to prolong the struggle, and had strengthened the will of the German Army and the German people to resist. Air Marshal John Slessor was convinced that the war might have been won by airpower alone had it not been for Roosevelt's policy of total defeat. Slessor held that the policy had unfortunate influences on the outcome of the war, having affected both the bombing planning and the German will to resist. General Albert C.

Wedemeyer says that he advised against the limitation on surrender believing it would "weld the Germans together." He pointed out that it stiffened German resistance, extended the duration of the war, and he criticized Roosevelt's refusal to recognize the Hitler opposition in Germany. According to General Mark Clark, unconditional surrender was categorically responsible for the Germans fanatical resistance and delayed the surrender of German forces in Italy.

One of the policy's most unfortunate effects was upon the anti-Nazi resistance within Germany. While it is true that most Germans approved of Hitler's initial leadership of a resurgent and economically strong Germany, and they were ecstatic over his bloodless annexations of neighboring German-minority territories, William L. Shirer contends that when Germany invaded Poland, "the people in the streets were apathetic...to find themselves in a war which they had been sure the Fuehrer somehow would avoid." Many Germans thought the Nazis had gone too far and that the Reich would be doomed in a two-front war that both the West and the Russians would be certain to enter. Many of the highest officers in the Wehrmacht opposed war, some on moral grounds, others believing Germany was not prepared for war. Thousands of Germans sacrificed their lives and thousands more were placed in concentration camps for their opposition to the Nazis. At the risk of their lives persons opposed to Hitler and the war commenced their efforts to contact and negotiate with Allied representatives before the war started and lasted throughout the conflict. In fact, before the war in 1938 contacts were made in the West regarding the possibility of assistance against Hitler, but no commitments could be obtained.

Actually, regarding the possibility of negotiations for peace during the war, the German resisters considered Churchill preferable to Roosevelt. They knew that a negotiated cessation of hostilities would be necessary to preserve Germany as a nation and to avoid the terror of Soviet occupation. There were indications that Churchill would have pursued such a course which would have been obviously advantageous to the West. But the Prime Minister was aware that as Chief-of-State Franklin Roosevelt outranked him, and he had learned that in a showdown, the American President should have his way if Britain was to continue to receive the cooperation and support from the United States necessary in her desperate struggle to survive. Even as late as 1944, however, Churchill called on the Germans to overthrow Hitler, and he tried to do his best without offending

Roosevelt to modify Allied conditions for surrender and to make a distinction between the German people and the Nazis. In the meantime, there were many contacts between the German resistance and the British, but Churchill felt he could only pass the word back to them that he was sure a way could be found to work out an arrangement, once Hitler had been overthrown. Obviously, that was fatally insufficient.

In 1943 even the head of the German military intelligence, Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, met secretly in Paris with the leader of the French underground intelligence service. He wanted to know from the British what compromises on Allied peace terms would be granted to Germany if Adolf Hitler was overthrown. Churchill's only reply, in consideration of Roosevelt's rigid position, was "unconditional surrender." Within a year and a half Canaris was executed as one of the original conspirators against the Nazi Fuehrer.

Throughout the war Roosevelt not only had continued to refuse to modify his position but actually insisted on an official policy forbidding American representatives to seek contact with Hitler's opponents and not to encourage resistance to the Nazi regime by the Germans. He considered the resisters to be unimportant and ineffective and that they were no more than a small band of "militarists and reactionaries." Allen Dulles found his activities in Switzerland to be frustrated by Roosevelt's policy and conditions, observing that "Allied policy towards Germany was frozen into the formula of 'unconditional surrender'...Goebbels and Hitler were able to use 'unconditional surrender' to prolong a totally hopeless war for many months." General William Donovan, head of the American OSS, prepared a report for the President entitled, "Overtures by German Generals and Civilian Opposition for a Separate Armistice." Once Roosevelt had refused to even consider a change in policy, Donovan could only report to Secretary Hull that since early 1944 "an impressive group of military and political leaders" were ready to overthrow Hitler and aid Allied landings. Diplomat George Kennan asserted that the policy implying "equal severity whether or not Hitler was overthrown, simply cut the ground out from under any moderate German opposition," and Hanson W. Baldwin, military expert for the *New York Times*, concluded that:

> The Franklin D. Roosevelt-Winston Churchill ultimatum cuts the props from beneath several factions in Germany who were plotting to

> replace or subordinate Hitler. After Stalingrad, many of the high officers in the German Army were in at least subconscious rebellion, but the Casablanca Declaration, with its strong implication of a prostrate Germany ravaged by Communist hordes from the East, quenched even the inner fires of revolt. Given so stark an alternative as 'unconditional surrender,' there seemed to be to most Germans no choice but to fight on.

Allen Dulles also pointed out that most of the leaders against Hitler shared western cultural and political traditions, were naturally oriented toward the West rather than toward Russia, and wished to end the war by negotiation with the West before Germany could be occupied by the Soviet Union. When there had been no hope from the West, many of the non-Communist resisters ultimately turned toward the East to save Germany since Russia offered an alternative to the incessant Allied demand for unconditional surrender. Dulles thought the policy had served as a deterrent to the German generals who otherwise would have been willing to act against Hitler. After the war resistance leaders in Germany claimed that the Western policy had helped the Nazis mobilize fanatic determination and support to carry on the war by both military and civilians, and at the same time, it had demoralized those who would have risen against Hitler, but who had become convinced that further resistance would be useless in view of Allied policy. They declared that while most Germans were fed up with the war, they were neither for or against Hitler since they cared only for survival. They knew the war had been lost, but with Nazi propaganda as their only source of news and information, they were convinced that the Allies gave them no choice but total defeat. Most of all, they feared the destruction and occupation of their homeland by the Bolsheviks.

No issue about World War II has been debated more intensely and constantly than the total war policy. It was the most important policy question of the war and its supporters and opponents represented all shades of opinion. Some of Roosevelt's most faithful advisors criticized him strongly for his responsibility for unconditional surrender. At the same time, conservative opponents of the President commended his "ultra-conservative" attitude favoring the annihilation of Germany and Japan, a position opposed by many of his liberal supporters. FDR, who habitually thought in domestic political terms, obviously wanted to avoid isolationist criticism of his conduct of American wartime affairs. He

believed that the total destruction of the Axis powers would not only provide a new beginning for his "United Nations," but it would eliminate the necessity for the United States to become more involved in European affairs. He also undoubtedly believed that American support of his internationalism, as represented by his United Nations, would be politically offset at home by a conservative attitude against the liberal treatment of Germany at war's end. In any case, since the impact of unconditional surrender had such a direct and substantial influence on the conduct and result of World War II, as well as the balance of world power thereafter, it will remain one of the most controversial issues regarding United States national policy.

After the war other Roosevelt loyalists argued that his surrender policy had been "one of the most effective achievements of American statesmanship of the entire war period." They believed it had served the best political and strategic interests of the United States since it placated the Russian demand for a Second Front, served notice that none of the Allies would make deals or compromises with the despised enemy, and postponed disagreements on postwar issues in the expectation of better opportunities for Allied cooperation for peace after the war. It was also contended that there was nothing new in the attitudes behind the policy, that a distinction was made between the people and their governments, and that the dictators had to be removed before a peaceful world could be established. Others pointed out that there was no evidence that unconditional surrender had prevented the overthrow of Hitler and negotiations to end the war, that the Nazi hold over the German people and the military had been absolute, and that only a few disgruntled and disillusioned individuals were in opposition to Hitler. Furthermore, there had been an "absolute necessity" to maintain the "Grand Coalition" to insure victory over Germany and Japan. Lastly, supporters of the policy held that it was necessary for every country to provide its people with a readily believed reason for making war and a continuing motivation for the necessary support and determination to insure victory. In other words, it made a good "war cry" for the Allies, many of the problems between the co-belligerents were deferred until after the war, it assured a total victory over the enemy, and it eliminated the major obstacles to future world peace.

But the arguments for unconditional surrender remain unconvincing compared to the storm of opposition which has arisen from historians, military

leaders, diplomats and foreign policy advisors in both the United States and in Great Britain. Opposition had begun to appear even before Roosevelt's announcement at Casablanca and it has continued to this day. Two of the first, most important and strongest opponents of the President's position were Roosevelt's own cabinet members Cordell Hull and Henry Stimson, who immediately understood the substantial and unfavorable influence it would have on American postwar interests. Hull not only claimed that the policy had not been approved by the State Department, due to concern that it might strengthen Nazi resistance and prolong the war, but for the practical reason, among others, that the total defeat of Germany would require the Allies to takeover and operate all aspects of the German government, which they would not be prepared to do. It was also obvious to them, as well as to many other critics, that the total destruction of Germany would create a vacuum in Central Europe which would invite a Soviet takeover. But Roosevelt, in the absolute conviction that he was right, continued to refuse to recognize, as Winston Churchill understood, that in the inevitable future conflict between the ideologies of East and West, it was vitally important to the future of the free world and for the establishment of world peace, that a new democratic and capitalistic Germany should align its traditional cultural and economic interests with the democratic powers of the West.

Roosevelt's stubborn refusal to change his unconditional surrender policy "was the biggest political mistake during the war" Hanson Baldwin believed. He says that whereas President Wilson had been careful to make a distinction between the Kaiser and the German people, and that Josef Stalin had separated Hitler and his Nazis from the citizens of Germany and the German Army, Roosevelt and Churchill fatally missed the opportunity to divide the German people and the government of Germany to hasten the end of the war. In fact, Baldwin said that "unconditional surrender was an open invitation to unconditional resistance; it discouraged opposition to Hitler, probably lengthened the war, cost us lives, and helped to lead to the present abortive peace."

Some policy defenders have argued that American and British leaders were forced to support the issue for fear that the Soviets might make a separate treaty with Germany and because the Western Allies were on the defensive over their inability to fulfill their promise to the Soviets for a Second Front in 1943. However, as we now know, Roosevelt's policy did not deter Stalin from

continuing his efforts to enter into a separate peace, nor did it help to overthrow the Nazi regime for a negotiated end to the war. In consideration of Hitler's treacherous violation of the German-Soviet non-aggression pact, the vicious surprise attack and brutal devastation of large parts of Russia by the German occupation, the subjection of Soviet prisoners to slave labor, and the SS genocide against the population, it was unlikely that anyone would have expected Stalin to consider making peace when, at the time of the Casablanca Conference, the Soviets were winning the Battle of Stalingrad and the tide of war in the East had already turned in favor of Russia.

Furthermore, it was completely improbable for Western leaders to believe that Stalin could place any faith in another pact with Adolf Hitler. According to B. H. Liddell Hart, Britain as well as the United States, had abandoned "any pragmatic political aims" since total defeat meant no off-setting balance of power in Europe against the Soviet "top dog." He was convinced that the war had been won by mid-1943 with the Germans on the defensive in both the East and West and that was when preparations for the end of hostilities should have begun when terms for the Germans were meaningful before "their complete downfall." He said that, in effect, the policy resulted in the worst possible consequences by keeping the German people under Nazi control, gave them no choice but to "sink or swim," created the costliest policy possible by prolonging the war "far beyond its likely end," vastly increased the loss of life and destruction, and resulted in "Russian supremacy" in Central Europe.

Winston Churchill and British planners had known all along how important it was for Germany to remain in the "Western orbit" after the war and that the Allies should not permit the Soviets to gain control of Central Europe. But they also knew they could not risk an open break with the Americans who literally controlled Britain's future fate. Churchill did the best he could and struggled consistently against both Roosevelt and Stalin for what he considered to be the best long-term interests of the democratic countries. But Franklin Roosevelt was convinced that he could gain what he considered to be "Uncle Joe's" necessary support for the United Nations to maintain peace and security at the end of the war, and he mistakenly believed that the United States needed the Russians for the defeat of Japan. Consequently, beginning with the first Big Three meeting in 1943, Roosevelt carefully avoided any serious disagreements with the Soviet leader

who, knowing how vitally important it was for the survival of Russia for the President to believe that he had won Russia's cooperation in postwar affairs, Stalin made sure that it appeared that he and the President were in agreement on every possible question. Thus Roosevelt and Stalin generally took positions on major issues which were either different from or opposed to those of the British Prime Minister. Indisputably, again like Woodrow Wilson, Roosevelt's compromise of principle resulted in calamitous consequences for mankind and for world peace.

Gaddis Smith argues that the harm of the total victory slogan was its impact on the making of American foreign policy. He said it was the "antithesis" of good planning and oversimplified postwar problems with the mistaken belief that it would bring about a "wonderful world of peace." He claimed that the Americans generally had been led to believe that unconditional surrender would "wipe the slate clean," and that the practice of setting aside all issues not immediately and directly related to winning the war became the predominant attitude of the Western Allies. Richard Lamb believed that it tragically "produced in Germany a revival of enthusiasm for the Nazi Party almost unbelievable in the light of the military collapse in Normandy," not to mention their disasters in the East.

At any time after the announcement at Casablanca, Roosevelt and Churchill could have indicated to the enemy what kind of alternative surrender treatment could have been expected, according to Herbert Feis. In spite of the adoption of the policy, and regardless of how many times it had been repeated, it still did not determine the surrender terms that were entered into with Italy, Germany or Japan. "Such decisions," Feis stated, "followed their own determinative causes in each instance. They were not, as is so often argued, the inescapable wake of a policy that required the enemy to submit with no recourse."

Ambassador William Bullitt charged in his article "*How We Won the War and Lost the Peace*," that Roosevelt's concentration on the military effort without comparable political considerations was disastrous for future world peace. He also said that only Stalin realized that nothing has a greater political impact on history than war. The Roosevelt and Churchill position on surrender, in the opinion of William Hardy McNeill, disguised from the public, officials and themselves the need to make proper plans for peaceful and orderly arrangements in the conquered countries. "It was not so much 'Unconditional Surrender' as such," he observed, "but the attitude behind it that can be blamed for any prolongation of

the war in Europe." He also thought that the German generals could have displaced Hitler and sued for peace at any time after the Normandy landings "had they not been disheartened by the stony bleakness of Unconditional Surrender." McNeill brands the notorious Morgenthau Plan, an outgrowth of unconditional surrender, as a "monstrous mistake" and he concludes that many thousands of Germans preferred death in battle rather than submit to the Morgenthau starvation plan, believing that it was a fate equally as bad as what the Russians might do to them for the crimes of the Nazis. Roosevelt, he adds, "never understood the inherent limitations of the wartime coalition. Instead, he propagated the myth that once Fascist aggression was destroyed, the world would move into a new era of international peace and harmony."

The revisionists have consistently and vigorously attacked Roosevelt's prohibition against negotiation with the military and political opposition in Germany. They contend that if greater encouragement and assistance had been provided Hitler's opponents in Germany, the Nazi dictator could have been eliminated and peace would have been negotiated. Claiming that the rigid opposition to any negotiation and continuous demands for total surrender confirmed Hitler's threat to the German people to choose "victory or annihilation." FDR's critics declare that in the absence of unconditional surrender, the Germans would have surrendered earlier because of their dreaded fear of Russian occupation and that, clearly, the enemy was more easily persuaded to prefer annihilation to Soviet occupation which meant to them a fate worst than death—rape, slavery and extinction under Bolshevik rule.

Anne Armstrong was convinced that Roosevelt's refusal to recognize the anti-Nazi movement in Germany was one of the great puzzles of the war. She also believed that the President's responsibility was far greater than Churchill's for he had set the pace. They were both wrong, John Grigg writes, for denying "freedom to maneuvre" for their Allies and the conspirators in Germany. James P. Warburg drafted a memorandum, which was forwarded to Roosevelt from the State Department, stating that the "strength through fear" line of the Nazis could not be broken without a definition of unconditional surrender, and that the Germans had to see that defeat and surrender could not be as bad as permitting the war to continue. But like the others, he was informed that the unconditional surrender policy was "reaffirmed in most emphatic terms."

Chester Wilmot holds that the application of the formula as a "carte blanche" in a world struggle was "both illogical and dangerous," that it caused the Western powers to sacrifice diplomatic flexibility, and gave the German people no escape from Hitler. In fact, German records show that General Hans Ulrich Rudel asked Hitler why he did not request an armistice with the West so that Germany might have the chance to defeat the Russians in the East? Hitler replied that he had tried to negotiate peace with the West since 1943, but the Allies had continued to demand unconditional surrender. Thus Hitler said, Germany had no choice but to do everything possible to enable his "decisive weapons" to gain victory. Without question, Nazi propaganda on the Allied policy was used to force resistance long after the war became hopeless and was continued to force the Germans to use every possible means to prolong the war through the last desperate battle of Berlin. Desmond Young considered the Allies to have been unable to negotiate peace because of the policy, that it forced the Germans together under Nazi leadership, made Hitler stronger than ever, and lengthened the war which cost hundreds of thousands of additional lives on both sides of the conflict.

It should have been obvious to Roosevelt and his advisors that there can be no surrender without conditions. Any surrender is an agreement and there can be no agreement without a mutual understanding as to what conditions the understanding is based upon. Usually hostilities are terminated with control being assumed by the victor. For example, quite contrary to Roosevelt's consistent insistence on unconditional surrender, in Italy pre-conditions were broadcast to Rome and the surrender was conditioned on an Allied pre-agreement to protect the Italians from German retaliation, as well as to give the Italians the opportunity to fight with the Allies against the Germans. In the war with Japan, the Tojo government used the unconditional surrender threat to continue resistance by telling the Japanese that the Americans would kill all Japanese people. Still, in spite of four years of suicidal resistance which brought massive casualties and vast destruction to Japan, and even after two horrifying and devastating attacks by atomic bombs, the Japanese accepted the demand for "unconditional surrender" only subject to a major compromise which was finally accepted by the Allies—the retention of the Japanese Emperor.

After the end of the European war, the Joint Chief's planning staff had warned that the Allied surrender policy was not understood by the Japanese.

Furthermore, Marshal Stalin notified the Americans that modification of unconditional surrender would encourage the Japanese not to fight "to the finish" and he told Winston Churchill that a message from the Japanese Emperor indicated that terms other than unconditional surrender might be acceptable to the Japanese government. But President Harry Truman, adhering strictly to Franklin Roosevelt's wartime policies, stubbornly refused to modify the policy and on July 26, 1945 the demand for unconditional surrender was repeated. Tragically, to the final day of the war, Franklin Roosevelt's uncompromising policy of unconditional surrender prevented the acceptance of the actual terms which were later agreed upon and otherwise could have saved many thousands of additional American and Japanese lives. If the United States had stated its final position earlier, Secretary Stimson believed, the war would have been ended and the tragedy of the atomic bomb would not have occurred.

In his memoirs Winston Churchill admits that the slogan, which he believed had no effect on Hitler, stiffened the will of the German soldier to fight. He also said that the Russians believed it to be a mistake and that it was accordingly "an error in the politics of conflict." From the time at Casablanca when he condescended to Roosevelt on unconditional surrender, Churchill had never been comfortable with the policy. In fact, the British Chiefs had cautioned that it might toughen resistance, but the Prime Minister informed them it would be useless to take it back to Roosevelt who would only say that he was "very much disinclined to remodel his statements." After pointing out that both British and American psychological warfare experts believed that the no surrender principle would create "desperate resistance" by the enemy, Robert Sherwood revealed that they thought Roosevelt had created a "disastrous mistake" by announcing the Allied surrender policy publicly, and that others considered the "world's postwar troubles" had been caused by the insistence on unconditional surrender. Obviously Sherwood, in spite of his devotion to Franklin Roosevelt, could not disassociate himself from that conclusion, adding that "I can make no comment on this theory in this book."

It is known that Harry Hopkins and Franklin Roosevelt had decided long before the Casablanca conference that the Soviet Union would be the dominant power in Europe after the defeat of Germany. Furthermore, FDR was supremely confident that he could handle the Soviet Marshal and that he would gain the

friendship and cooperation of the Soviet Union even though it was then known that Stalin had been as vicious and as brutal in Russia as Hitler was in Germany. Actually, the President had forbidden any actions which might make the Soviets suspicious regarding American objectives, or which might affect the development of better relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. While it is understandable that the cooperation of the Russians was important in the common struggle against Hitler's Germany, it is difficult to understand how Franklin Roosevelt could have believed that a regime dedicated to the violent revolutionary overthrow of the non-Communist world, and which was under the control of a Soviet dictator who had brutally massacred millions of his fellow Russians, could be trusted to cooperate in the accomplishment of democratic objectives after the war? In that Roosevelt was a product of a society based on Christian principles of a free and capitalistic government which the Soviets were dedicated to overthrow with their atheistic Communist ideology, it is understandable why an American President would say that "we must not let those differences divide us or blind us to our more important common and continuing interest in winning the war and building the peace." But to have given a dictator of the ideological enemy of a democratic and free society a veto over postwar policy, as well as the future formulation and execution of an international organization for world peace, was either totally egocentric or outright incompetency.

It is also well-known that Franklin Roosevelt was influenced by committed socialist and disloyal advisors, such as Harry Hopkins and Alger Hiss, who were dedicated to doing everything possible to help the same Soviet Union which had voluntarily entered into a non-aggression pact with Germany knowing it opened the way for the Nazis to attack Poland and the West without Soviet interference. Other presidential advisors were at least naive, unrealistic and ignorant about the reality of the prospect for peace and the challenge which would face the cause of freedom at war's end. Regardless of intentions, Franklin Roosevelt's wartime performance must be judged by the consequences of his policies and leadership which resulted not only in the occupation of the vacuum in Central Europe by the Soviet Union, but also produced a worldwide struggle with an aggressive militant Communist "superpower." Had Roosevelt not created and insisted upon the unconditional surrender policy, the war would have ended under circumstances which could have prevented a power-vacuum in Central Europe, the

Soviets would have been denied the occupation of independent countries except under joint Allied control, democratic governments would have prevailed in Central Europe, and the world would have been denied the terrible ravages of the Cold War.

Both Smith and Feis, however, disagree with the allegation that Roosevelt's concept of surrender was one of the greatest mistakes of the war. Smith says that FDR's critics "play down" numerous statements by the President and the Prime Minister to explain that "extermination or mass slavery for the defeated" was not intended, and that "guilty governments were to be eliminated unconditionally," but not the people who would be "rehabilitated" for national restoration. While Smith admits that the Nazis were able to successfully distort the policy for propaganda advantage, he also cautions against the word of those Germans who attempted to avoid any responsibility for the consequences of the war by saying they had always opposed Hitler, and that had it not been for the Allied policy of unconditional surrender, the Nazi Fuehrer would have been overthrown. Feis concluded that the surrender policy had been only "a minor influence" upon the Germans "except perhaps in the very last spell of the war."

The President was also supported by those who pointed out that in order to best insure victory over the Nazi horror there was no choice but to assist and to cooperate with the Soviets by demanding the total defeat of Germany and Japan. That view, however, was challenged as being too "defensive and simplistic," and ignored the leverages available to such a successfully manipulative President. Particularly, when he had both the power and the opportunity to direct the conduct of the war as he chose because the Soviets, as well as the British, knew that only the United States could provide the material resources necessary for the defeat of Hitler's Germany. If Franklin Roosevelt had used his political skills as he consistently did at home, and as he successfully used to maintain his 'unconditional surrender' policy, he could have completely changed the outcome of the war and its consequences. The war could have been ended when the Germans would have agreed to withdraw from the Soviet Union, Soviet occupation of Central Europe and Germany would have been averted, a democratic and unified Germany would have been established, the Soviets would not have been made a "super-power," the Cold War would not have occurred, the principles of the Atlantic Charter might have been attained, and the long-sought international

cooperation championed by Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt could have been effectively established for the maintenance of world peace. But the tragedy was that even though most of those whose advice FDR should have sought, including his British and Russian partners, considered his surrender policy to have been a critical mistake, yet it remained the principal policy of the Allies to the war's bitter end.

Simply by agreeing to modify or even to define his policy, the President could have shortened the war by a year or more which would have saved the lives of many thousands and thousands of Allied soldiers and hundreds of thousands of Germans and Japanese, and it also could have prevented much of the liquidation of the Jews in the final months of the war. Instead, Roosevelt revealed himself as being egotistical as well as unrealistic when he had said, "I have a hunch that Stalin...doesn't want anything but security for his country, and I think that if I give him everything I can and ask for nothing in return, nobless oblige." He also had the gall to inform Churchill that, "I hope you will not mind my being brutally frank when I tell you I can personally handle Stalin better than either your Foreign Office or my State Department. Stalin hates the guts of your top people. He thinks he likes me better and I hope he will continue to do so." How FDR could expect a Communist dictator who advocated worldwide revolution to cooperate with the democratic West after the war to establish and support an international organization based on democratic principles exceeds all rationality!

The subordination of the political interests of the United States to the dominance of military strategy was based on the President's belief that it would postpone potentially divisive Allied questions until after victory. Meanwhile he could build goodwill with the Soviets whose cooperation would be needed for his United Nations to fulfill its role in maintaining peace in the postwar world. But his critics charged that was a totally hopeless and unrealistic assumption from its inception, that while it was in the interest of the Western democracies to help the Soviets who could not defeat Germany without American support, there was never any practical basis whatsoever for anyone to hope, much less to expect, a strongly committed Communist state to do anything after World War II other than to seek its own security, and to continue to promote the revolutionary overthrow of the free world. Therefore, it is impossible to ignore the influence of

excessively liberal idealism or overwhelming egotism to which Franklin Roosevelt was subjected.

Consequently, it was a fatal mistake for an American President whose knowledge of European affairs was limited, who had abandoned the long-established American process for the making and execution of foreign policy, whose self-confidence in the power of his political personality was substantial and who, like Woodrow Wilson, had little experience with the "hard-ball" politics traditionally employed by the politically cynical leaders of Europe. The American leader, who self-confidently and erroneously held too much faith in the power of professed friendship and personal charm in the game of international politics, was led to commit the greatest folly by believing that the Soviet dictator could be trusted to support democratic principles and to execute wartime agreements when there was no justification for expecting him to cooperate in the maintenance of world peace. Quite the contrary, both before and throughout the war it had been obvious that the Soviets would support only those conditions which could be manipulated for the future security of the Soviet Union and for the advancement of international Communism.

Franklin Roosevelt is generally considered to have been a great President and a successful political leader and no man can accept a more noble challenge than to seek to be a builder of world peace. But it was Roosevelt's tragedy, again like Woodrow Wilson at Versailles, that his commendable ideal for peace was in conflict with the reality of time and circumstance. Unfortunately, while Roosevelt dreamed and labored for his hope for international cooperation for world peace through the United Nations, Josef Stalin practiced "realpolitik" and succeeded in fulfilling his most important aims for Soviet security and Communist expansion. Realistically, whether in war or in peace, statesmanship and diplomacy are seldom effective against political expediency. In Roosevelt biographer Burn's opinion, "He was a superb tactician, and sometimes courageous leader but he failed to achieve that combination of tactical skill and strategic planning that represents the acme of political leadership."

The principal question is what could Roosevelt and Churchill have done to avoid the tragic consequences of their total victory policy? First, if they had conducted the war as every other war in modern times has been conducted, it would have ended with an armistice and a negotiated surrender. If they had not insisted

on total war against Germany and Japan, if the German conspirators against Hitler had been encouraged and effectively assisted, a negotiated peace could have been effected with Germany, then the concentration of Allied resources against Japan, if not negotiations, would have ended that conflict sooner as well. World War II could have been shortened by a year or more, Communism would have been denied political control of Central Europe, and the atomic bomb would not have been dropped on Japan. A different course should have followed more realistic political objectives, as advocated by the British, instead of pursuing the American President's insistence on the massive destruction of the enemy as a necessary basis for the establishment of world peace.

As early as 1943, Liddell Hart had warned that the Soviet domination of Europe after the war would imperil the interests of the West and he pointed out that domination by any one power had always caused wars in Europe. Hart felt it was obvious by then that Russia would takeover the Baltic countries as well as a major part of Poland, and that Russia would obviously acquire political control through occupation. He warned that the only alternative to control by Russia would be Germany as the only power capable of maintaining a "stable buttress" in Central Europe, and that once that power was destroyed, the "overwhelming military predominance" of the Red Army would be established. Other historians recognized the principle of Allied unity for victory, but considered it to have been apparent that such unity with Communist Russia would have been impossible after the war and that the future security of Western interests should not have been sacrificed in a futile effort to obtain it.

The Americans should have recognized the fact that the Russians had no choice but to cooperate with the West to get the necessary assistance to save the Soviet Union from total occupation, liquidation or enslavement. Therefore, American assistance should have been provided based only upon Soviet concessions to the West instead of the reverse. Stalin should have been required to execute agreements accepting the principles of the Atlantic Charter and agreeing to postwar settlements based on international law, including the joint Allied occupation and restoration of freely-elected democratic governments in Germany and Central Europe. Then if there had been a refusal to do so, or if the agreements were violated, the lend-lease supplies to the Soviet Union would have

been cut-off. Unquestionably, with no other choice available to the Soviets, compliance would have been obtained.

By all means, there should have been no declaration of "Unconditional Surrender." There was no justification whatsoever for the West to be bound regarding their conduct toward Germany while Russia refused to reciprocate. In the absence of unconditional surrender, and had Western policy not been tied to Soviet policy by Franklin Roosevelt, undoubtedly Hitler would have been overthrown and Germany would have surrendered to the West before the Soviets occupied East Europe and Germany. In spite of the terrible consequences all Germans expected from unconditional surrender, believing nothing could be worse than occupation by the Soviets, they attempted to surrender and make peace with the West while holding off the Soviets. But the maintenance of the inter-Allied agreement on the conditions for peace continued to be more important than to end the war as many thousands more died and hundreds of thousands fell victim to future death and enslavement in the Soviet Union. On innumerable occasions German initiatives for a separate peace could have been accepted. At least in the interest of stopping the mass killing of humanity, the United States and Great Britain could have agreed to an armistice in the West, as in World War I, while using their influence and power to negotiate a similar cessation of the conflict in the East. Even a violation of the "no separate peace" agreement with the Soviet Union could not possibly have resulted in worse aftereffects than the occupation and subjugation of East Germany and Eastern Europe by Soviet Communism. It was a horrendous blunder of such magnitude that it could only have been the consequence of irrational, stupid or disloyal advice to, and influence upon, the President of the United States.

The possibility of a separate peace in the West should have been used as leverage with the Soviets for agreements with provisions for enforcement which would have avoided the awesome circumstances of the Soviet occupation and control of Central Europe. The Americans and British would have had to accept the possibility of armed confrontation against the Soviets, clearly a risk they wished to avoid, but which would have been justified to avoid the brutal consequences of Soviet control and the liquidation of anti-Communists throughout East Europe. However, the Soviets were in no position to oppose the powerful might of the Western Allies. Their country had been largely devastated by the

Germans, its resources were nearly exhausted in the long and bitter struggle, and Russia desperately needed peace. Continuing the war against America and Britain would have been unthinkable for an army which, in spite of having vast forces of troops possessing the best tanks and most massive artillery in the world, still moved its men and supplies by wagons, and without American and British aid, would have had little chance of victory.

If Stalin still might have been inclined to fight the West for Soviet "security," the overwhelming superiority of American and British power, the American possession of the atomic bomb, Western access to German missiles and jets in addition to the continued resistance of Germany's armed forces, should have persuaded him to accept Western demands. On the other hand, in regard to their totally opposite ideologies, Stalin and Hitler were both brutal and demonic dictators. Like Hitler, the Soviet dictator might have insisted on a choice between his ideology and the destruction of Mother Russia. In that case, would war between East and West have been more tragic than almost fifty years of Soviet domination of East Europe? Unlikely, for the Soviets would have been incapable of effective resistance against the overwhelming weapon-power available to the Western air and ground forces, and the defeat of the Red Army would have quickly followed. George N. Crocker says that after the war Winston Churchill repeated four times that the "possession of the atom bomb in American hands kept the Red Army from invading Europe." While in Berlin the writer remembers hearing GI's make fun of Russian convoys passing through the city with horse-drawn wagons. And when they heard the "putt-putt" sound of a plane overhead, they would say derisively, "There goes the Russian air force!"

In any case, the consequences of the unconditional surrender policy were horrendous. If Roosevelt had given political strategy the same importance and priority as military tactics, the war would not have been prolonged. Averill Harriman said that Stalin tried unsuccessfully to get the President to modify his policy believing it made the Germans fight more desperately. It is safe to assume that the announcement of reasonable terms for surrender, to which the Russians would have agreed, and with Allied encouragement and assistance to the resistance in Germany, Hitler would have been overthrown and the end of the war would have been negotiated before the Russian armies overran Central Europe and Germany. The negotiated peace would have permitted Germany and the East European

countries to preserve their pre-war boundaries and would have denied Russian occupation, dismemberment and the Sovietization of Central Europe. Worldwide Communist expansion would have been limited, if not halted. Russia would not have become a superpower dedicated to the promotion of "wars of liberation" throughout the world bringing about the loss of many hundreds of thousands of lives, causing untold destruction and human suffering, resulting in the waste of thousands of billions of dollars on warfare and weapons, and committing the human race to the constant fear of nuclear obliteration. Unconditional surrender, also referred to as "unconditional hatred," permitted no alternatives and condemned the Western Allies to military victory and political defeat.

Liddell-Hart concludes his *History of the Second World War* with the statement that the surrender policy was the greatest obstacle of the war for the Allies in that it enabled both Hitler and the Japanese militarists to fight to the finish. He contends that had the policy been less threatening, that if the Allies had softened their conditions for peace, the German and Japanese people would have forced an end to the war before 1945. He also charged that "the unnecessary war was unnecessarily prolonged," resulted in the sacrifice of additional millions of lives, and opened Central Europe to Communist domination.

What might have happened had there been no unconditional surrender policy? It is certain that peace could have been negotiated sometime between the Battle of Stalingrad in January 1943 and the invasion of Normandy in June 1944 when the war was obviously over for Germany. The conflict could have possibly been shortened by two and a half years, and the period in which the heaviest killing and the greatest devastation of the war could have been avoided. While no accurate figures are available, it is estimated that had peace been negotiated in early 1943, almost 500,000 American casualties would not have occurred and perhaps another 500,000 casualties could have been saved among the British and other Western allied forces. On the German side alone, clearly more than two million military and civilian lives were lost in that period and no reliable estimate is available regarding the millions of Russians killed and wounded in the final two years of the war. Without question several million Jews could have been saved from the Holocaust, and even if the war had ended as late as the invasion of France, or up to six months before its brutal ending, the loss of millions of lives and untold human suffering would have been prevented.

There is no justification for the insane brutality of war under any circumstances. However, until mankind recognizes the necessity to substitute law for the role of force, the armed aggression of one state against another will continue to be resisted by counterforce. Clearly, the Allied belief that their cause against Hitler's fanatic Nazi aggression was just, but William V. O'Brien found that "the justice of the war was to some extent imperiled by the demands for unconditional surrender" which tended to "violate the conditions and spirit of just war."

The weight of historical evidence firmly establishes the conclusion that the policy of "Unconditional Surrender" was the greatest blunder of World War II. It was directly responsible for the unnecessary prolongation of the war which brought death to many additional millions of human beings, and it enlarged and extended incredible suffering throughout Europe and Asia. Equally disastrously, it also resulted in nearly fifty years of conflict between Communism and Democracy which not only brought death, suffering and enslavement to many more millions of human beings, but the resultant Cold War wasted huge resources on armaments which could have eradicated hunger, illness and poverty in many parts of the world.

If the policy of unconditional surrender had never been adopted, as was the case in every other war in modern history, what could have been the consequences of a negotiated surrender? First, the war in Europe probably would have ended at least eleven months earlier by June 1944 when the German eastern front was still in Russia. Hitler would have been overthrown and a democratic government would have taken power. All occupied and annexed territories would have been released by Germany and most of Germany's major pre-war boundaries, together with those of the East European countries, would have been maintained. The huge loss of life and the massive destruction of the Soviet Union, confronted by the military might and economic power of the United States, could have enabled the democratic freedom of the East European countries to be maintained. And importantly, substantial casualties, vast destruction and human suffering throughout Europe and Russia would have been avoided and Central Europe would have regained its economic and political well-being. But most importantly, the world would not have been subjected to the warfare, destruction and suffering of the Cold War.

Chapter 8

The Tehran Conference

The most important conference of World War II took place when the leaders of the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union met for the first time at Tehran, Iran in November 1943. The first meeting of the "Big Three" enabled them to become better acquainted and to reach agreements on policies, cooperation and actions that would be necessary for victory by the three major opponents to the military aggressions of Germany, Italy and Japan. Unfortunately, however, it was at Tehran that President Franklin Roosevelt, Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Premier Josef Stalin also initially negotiated the most influential political decisions regarding their post-war relations with Germany and among themselves that would so disastrously impact the future course of human history.

At the end of World War I, most Americans were hostile to the atheistic Bolshevik takeover of Russia. However, in the early 1930's, the newly elected President Franklin Roosevelt arbitrarily decided that the United States should recognize the existing fact of the Soviet Union government without attempting to make it conform to the American idea of government. His belief that "If I could only, myself, talk to some one man representing the Russians, I could straighten out this whole thing" indicated his ego-oriented choice to resort to personal politics rather than enlightened statesmanship which would have such disastrous consequences for worldwide freedom and democracy after World War II. In fact, the majority of Americans preferred to ignore Russia until the infamous German-Soviet non-aggression pact permitted the two dictators to swallow up the freedom of Poland. Then, most Americans considered the Soviet Union to be no better than Germany and felt that the Communists and the Nazis deserved each other. Even when Germany launched its surprise attack on Russia on June

22, 1941, many Americans believed that the world would be better off if they destroyed each other.

Franklin Roosevelt, however, believed that while most Americans disliked the idea of cooperating with the Communist government of Russia even in war, free men had no choice but to defeat the brutal threat to freedom by Fascist aggression. The United States and Britain feared that a Soviet defeat and a separate peace with the Nazis would greatly reduce the prospects of a victory by the Western Allies and would subject all of Europe, and much of the world, to the horrors of Nazi genocide and slavery. Consequently, the majority of the American and British people believed there was no choice but to accept Soviet Communism as the lessor of the two evils. Under the circumstances, Roosevelt and Churchill considered it to be imperative for the best interests of the democracies for Russia to remain in the war and to cooperate with the West to defeat Hitler's Nazism.

Roosevelt's wartime policy towards the Soviet Union was originated by General James Burns who served as assistant to Harry Hopkins, the former social worker that became the President's top aide on foreign policy, and was in charge of American aid to the Soviets. Burns concluded that Russia would be needed as a military ally against Japan as well as against Germany, that Japan could not be beaten without Russian help, and that the defeat of the Soviets by either Germany or Japan would imperil an Allied victory. Accordingly, the United States had to be "so helpful and friendly" towards the Soviet Union that she would not only help to defeat Germany and Japan, but would also play an essential role in building peace and better relations in the postwar world. He proposed that the Soviets be treated as one of the three great world powers, that everything possible be done to help her defeat Germany including postponing war with Japan until Germany was defeated, and to "agree to assist, in every proper and friendly way, to formulate a peace that will meet Russia's legitimate aspirations." In effect, it specifically laid out the policies which Hopkins and the American internationalists would successfully use to influence the politician Roosevelt to concede to democracy's avowed enemy the major role in determining the future of international cooperation with disastrous consequences for much of mankind.

Winston Churchill had been first to pledge all aid possible in support of Russian resistance, but Roosevelt sent Hopkins to Moscow to meet with Stalin to

determine what was needed and how to rush it to the Soviets. After lengthy meetings with the Soviet Marshal, Hopkins was convinced that Russia could not resist, much less defeat, the Nazis without great quantities of aid from America and Britain. In fact, Hopkins was so impressed with Stalin and the Soviet's struggle that, according to Robert Sherwood, he remained an "aggressive friend of Russia and an intense admirer of Russia's gigantic contribution to the winning of the war." After his return from Moscow, Hopkins convinced Churchill and Roosevelt of the necessity "to extend all possible aid to the Soviet Union at the earliest possible date."

At their Atlantic Conference in mid-1941 at Newfoundland, Roosevelt and Churchill formed their "great coalition" and were considerably relieved that the Russians had joined the struggle against Germany. However, they were concerned that an intervention by Japan would result in a victory for Germany. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Americans produced the Declaration of the Atlantic Charter which was approved by the British in the belief that it was only a public relations release. But once the Charter had been proclaimed by Roosevelt and Churchill, the British suddenly found themselves committed to principles which the President later used as the basis for his future international peace diplomacy, much to their distress.

By September 1941 FDR had assured both Churchill and Stalin that "ways will be found to provide material and supplies necessary to fight Hitler on all fronts." Meanwhile, Stalin urgently pleaded for a "Second Front" attack on Germany to help avoid a possible collapse of the Red Army. But, even while the Germans were rushing towards Moscow, Stalin was already deeply concerned about political objectives. When informed about the Atlantic Charter, he only wanted to know what would be done to make the Germans pay for war damages, and was told that the war had to be won first. Then, once he had given the Americans his priority lists for war supplies, Stalin concentrated on his "aims and politics" after Germany's defeat.

As soon as the Soviet counterattacks, with the timely intervention of the subnormal temperatures of "General Winter," stopped the German assault in the suburbs of Moscow, Stalin began to pressure Britain and America for post-war European political agreements. He pressed for commitments for border settlements with Poland, Rumania, the Baltic States and Finland, raised questions about areas that would be liberated from German occupation, and even future

interests regarding Greece and Turkey. It should have been obvious to Roosevelt, as it began to be with Churchill, that while the Russians were fighting for survival, Stalin never lost sight of his political objective to impose revolutionary Communism throughout as much of Europe as possible. It should have been apparent that it was essential to have recognized at the beginning of the relationship with the Soviets, when they could not have maintained their independence without American aid, that concessions should have been obtained from the Soviets which would have avoided the catastrophic political results of World War II. But instead of heeding the many warnings he received from various sources both before and throughout the war, Roosevelt was determined he could convince the Soviets to trust and cooperate with their ideological enemies in building a new and peaceful post-war world.

In spite of substantial American and British aid to the Soviets, Stalin continued his suspicious conduct towards the West throughout the war. He not only consistently refused to provide detailed information about the military situation in Russia, but continued to believe that the British and the Americans were stalling on a Second Front waiting until Russia had made its maximum sacrifice against Hitler. At the same time, Soviet propaganda refused to recognize Western military actions and their aid against the Nazis. Instead of being a warning as to what lay ahead, Roosevelt considered it to be merely a distrust of the West that he would overcome and he determined that there would be no grounds for the Soviets to challenge the goodwill and good intentions of the United States. In spite of the general public knowledge about Soviet aggressive aims and the subversive anti-democratic goals of world Communism, together with the well-established record of Soviet violence and treachery, it was the totally naive, irresponsible and unjustified political cooperation of the Western Allies with the Communist Marshal which gave rise to the Cold War and subjected so much of the world to the influence and control of international Communism. Without question, it was one of the most destructive political blunders in history.

Even before the United States entered the war, the American and British military prepared for the President a document on "the basic strategy of a global war," and it was considered to be a "brilliant" statement of interests and objectives in the war. It stressed that Germany sought the occupation and domination of Europe, the destruction of Russian and British resistance, and the conquest of

the Middle East; that Britain and Russia could not avoid defeat by Germany without American aid and military intervention; and that the establishment of regimes based on "economic freedom and individual liberty" was essential to insure world political stability for the future security of the United States. But Roosevelt consistently refused to recognize the necessity for political settlements before the end of the war so as to avoid all possible mistrust of the United States by Russia which might prevent the international cooperation necessary for the success of his proposed United Nations. And, when British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden went to Moscow (just as the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor), to discuss Stalin's concern for postwar affairs, Roosevelt informed the British that "constitutional limitations" would make it unwise to enter into any commitments with the Russians, especially secret ones, regarding postwar settlements. That became an attitude and a policy for which great worldwide suffering and many millions of lives would be sacrificed.

Despite Churchill's warnings, Roosevelt consistently refused to recognize that the Soviets were fighting not only to defeat the Germans and become a world power, but to advance international Communism. Had Roosevelt not been so absorbed with his own agenda, he should have recognized that the Soviets could not defeat Germany without American aid and Stalin should have been forced to make concessions to receive Allied assistance. But the great tragedy was that the idealistic internationalism of Roosevelt interfered with the adoption of more practical agreements which might have effectively established the principles and conditions for peace for which so many millions of human beings had given their lives and endured great suffering in both world wars. Instead, they persisted in pursuing unrealistic and impractical principles and goals under conditions of worldwide turmoil when they should have confronted the political and ideological realities which gravely threatened the peace and security of the postwar world.

Shortly after America entered the war against Japan and Germany in December 1941, Churchill and Roosevelt met at Washington. They agreed that the main effort of the Allied war effort would be in Europe with priority for the liberation of German-controlled areas, to give all possible aid to the Soviets, to expand the assault in the Middle East, and to launch the invasion of North Africa in early 1942. Their final act involved the adoption of a declaration of common principles and actions which bound the Allies against their common Axis

enemies. Roosevelt was so pleased that twenty-six governments had come together to execute the Declaration of "Associated Powers" that he changed the name to "United Nations," and thereafter believed that he had founded the basis for a new international organization which would bring future peace and security to the world.

Meanwhile, Germany's relentless and successful assaults against the Allies in North Africa and in Russia continued. While Soviet counterattacks had provided some temporary relief, the fury of the German attacks continued their advances in Russia. With the submarine warfare in the Atlantic seriously reducing American aid, it was questionable how long Russia might hold out, and Communist propaganda began to criticize the lack of adequate help from Britain and America. At Washington, Roosevelt adopted Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations idea for world peace with speeches developing the "Atlantic Charter" proposal into his concept for a "United Nations." He called for the Charter to include the principles of the worldwide application of disarmament, self-determination, and his "Four Freedoms." And soon he began to advocate principles and concepts of trust and cooperation, however just theoretically, which led him to postpone critical political decisions during the war that provided Communist Russia the opportunity to occupy and seize the military and political domination of East Europe. So, inevitably, the Soviet Union replaced Great Britain as the world's second great power and would become America's most fanatic enemy in the Cold War.

Following his visit to Moscow in 1942, Anthony Eden also greatly affected Western relations with the USSR by his memo to Churchill stating that it would be necessary to meet Soviet claims for aid to allay their suspicions, and that where Allied help was needed, close cooperation was essential and would make "all the difference after the war." Later, an unattributed addition referred to Soviet claims on Finland and the Baltic states, and noted that "they should be in a strong position in the Baltic." According to author Alex de Jonge, Eden's assumption that the Soviet's could be influenced to adopt "unselfish aims" was inexplicable since nothing had changed except that the USSR had been forced to defend itself from the Germans. In March, prior to his departure for Washington to discuss postwar cooperation by the "United Nations" governments, Eden was informed by the Soviets that they hoped he would make no definite commitments on postwar

settlements. He was also told that Russia would definitely takeover the Baltic States, would insist on a friendly government in Poland, and would demand that Germany be dismembered. When Eden visited Washington he informed Roosevelt and Hopkins about the Soviet positions adding that the Russians would expect Poland to takeover East Prussia and that Russia would not give up any part of Poland taken in the pact with Hitler. He also warned Roosevelt that Britain had determined that while the Soviets were operating under the appearance of cooperation with the West, it was clear that their vital interests would be handled strictly on a political basis.

After Eden left Washington, Hopkins went to see the Russian Ambassador Maxim Litvinov and told him about the meetings. Litvinov confirmed that Russia wanted the Baltic States and, while she would agree to Poland having East Prussia, the Soviet Union would insist on her "territorial rights" along their border with Poland. He also said that they wanted Germany dismembered. The West should have expected that the Soviets would attempt to demand future security against German aggression and it should have been apparent that a Communist state, advocating worldwide revolution against the Western-dominated world, would be guided only by political considerations and not by any sense of democratic idealism. But Roosevelt, under the influence of Hopkins and other liberal advisors, consistently refused to engage in any firm disagreements with the Soviet dictator, nor would he apply the considerable economic and military leverage America possessed to enforce concessions by the Russians to advance Western political objectives. The tragic blunder of Roosevelt was the assumption that idealism could prevail over realism under conditions of great ideological conflict involving an adversary with a background of brutal aggression.

Soon FDR began to push strongly for a new Allied attack in 1942 to provide help desperately needed by the Russians. The protocol with the USSR on aid would expire in June and would have to be renegotiated. The pressures from the Soviets for a Second Front had become intense, and extensive discussions as to when and where, dominated Allied relations. The Americans remained convinced that a frontal attack on France would be the shortest, most effective and least costly route to Germany, but the British believed that Allied penetrations up through the Balkans would produce far more important political consequences. Therefore, the British-American conflict over a Second Front became long and

bitter and most of the blame for the indecision and delay was placed on Winston Churchill by both the Americans and the Russians.

Fulfilling commitments for aid for Russia, in addition to Great Britain, continued to be a major problem for the United States. It involved the mobilization of a huge production force, vast material resources and large fleets of shipping while at the same time supplying and fighting the Japanese over an immense area of the Pacific. With desperate battles raging on the Eastern Front, Roosevelt and Hopkins did what they could to maximize public support and material assistance to provide as much help as possible to enable the Soviets to survive against the massive and relentless German assaults. Meanwhile, the Soviet campaign for an immediate Second Front continued using every political and propaganda means possible.

In May 1942 Soviet Foreign Minister V.M. Molotov came to Washington and while Roosevelt talked of disarmament and his conviction that postwar peace would last "at least twenty-five years," Molotov was only interested in a Second Front saying that Russia might not be able to hold out much longer. He argued that an attack in the west by the Allies could draw away as many as forty German divisions from the Russian Front, and he convinced Roosevelt to make a commitment for a Second Front in 1942. The President also told Molotov that he knew what he wanted to do about the disarmament of Germany and Japan after the war and that the four great powers would be the "guarantors of eventual peace." He also suggested that there would be colonial possessions that Russia might take trusteeship over, and he even inappropriately discussed with the Communist Commissar the future freedom of the Southeast Asia colonies of his British and French allies. Molotov quickly replied that Marshal Stalin agreed with the President and that Russia would fully support the President's ideas. After the meetings, Roosevelt cabled Churchill that he and Molotov had gotten along with "candor and friendship." Hopkins told Churchill that Molotov and the President had gotten along "famously," that much progress had been made in advancing relations between the two countries, and added, "We simply cannot organize the world between the British and ourselves without bringing the Russians in as equal partners."

The controversy over when the cross-channel attack would occur continued, but it became apparent that the demands for shipping facilities in the Pacific would prevent the Second Front from being launched in 1942. When Churchill

pursued every possible argument favoring the "soft underbelly" of Europe. Roosevelt always seemed to be swayed, at least temporarily, by Churchill's eloquence. But, at the same time, Churchill also sought to relieve German pressure on the Middle East. Tobruk had fallen and Rommel had badly beaten the "Desert Rats" in North Africa. And even though the Germans had pushed on in Russia past Sevastopol and across the Don into the Caucasus, it became increasingly more likely there would be no Second Front in 1942.

Roosevelt, however, continued to worry about his relations with the Soviets and he was determined that American forces should fight the Germans somewhere in 1942. He feared that an Allied failure to help relieve the pressure on the Russians would produce their loss of faith in the Western Alliance, and he was also aware that he and the Prime Minister had repeatedly promised publicly that there would be a Second Front. Also, over the objections of his military advisors, he agreed with the British to launch an Allied attack on North Africa. Consequently, largely as a result of political rather than military considerations, he committed American forces and resources in support of British strategy for operations in the Mediterranean which obviously would delay the cross-channel attack and, in the opinion of most American observers, involved vast Allied assets in operations of secondary importance which were adverse to the winning of the war at the earliest date with the fewest casualties possible.

In August 1942 Churchill visited Stalin at Moscow to discuss Allied strategic plans. Stalin, however, received the Prime Minister with a critical and insulting attitude toward the plans and efforts being made in the West, and questioned the politics and effectiveness of the Allied operations in North Africa. He considered the refusal to launch a Second Front in 1942 to be a "moral blow" to the Soviet people which endangered the conduct of the war by the Red Army. Declaring that the Soviet government was not interested in the African operation, he also complained bitterly over the non-delivery of promised supplies. The Communist leader's attitude was obviously influenced by the stress of the final phase of the Battle of Stalingrad which threatened to become the last desperate stand of the Soviets against the Nazis. Having no way to force the Allies to do otherwise, the Soviet Marshal reluctantly expressed his support for the African Operation TORCH.

Obviously, Soviet needs for aid were critical. They had requested massive monthly shipments of 500 planes, 10,000 trucks, 5,000 tons of aluminum, and

5,000 tons of explosives in addition to food supplies. The United States did what it could, considering the great demands for the Pacific war, as well as for Britain itself. Furthermore, the availability of transport, submarine warfare, winter weather and access to the Soviet Union were obstacles not easily overcome. Nonetheless, war records show that the production results of the national economy and the American people as the "Arsenal of Democracy," was a major miracle in determining the outcome of the war including the Battle for Russia. But at that time in the winter of 1942, it appeared that the available supply of aid would be "too little, too late" to possibly make the difference between victory and defeat in the brutal and relentless assault of the Germans against the Soviet Union.

When Roosevelt and Churchill proposed the first meeting of the "Big Three," Stalin indicated that their military alliance and agreement against a separate peace should be a treaty for an alliance after the war was over. But from the beginning of East-West relations, and at all levels thereafter, meetings with the Soviets were characterized by their "selfish distrust" in diplomatic negotiations which they consistently pursued throughout the war. Invariably, they began with a friendly initial meeting which was followed by another meeting which was disagreeable and difficult. Lastly, there would be a final meeting which became an "enthusiastic celebration" with vodka based, of course, on an agreement of Soviet terms. Even in 1959-60 when the writer was a United States Delegate to various United Nations conferences at Geneva, Switzerland, the same conference tactics were still being used by Soviet delegations. Continually throughout the most difficult times of the war, no agreements could be reached which did not directly benefit the Soviet Union and serve its long-term interests. When conditions were not to their advantage, both politically and militarily, there were long periods with no contact with the Allies, and usually the more things improved the less communicative and more suspicious they became. For example, they never approved landings in Russia for the Allied shuttle-bombing of Germany, and they never permitted the Russian people to know about the aid from America and Britain in order that they would believe they were fighting Germany alone.

By early 1943, Churchill agreed to meet with Roosevelt and he planned to bring Anthony Eden with him, but Roosevelt, not wishing Secretary of State Hull to be present, insisted that Eden not attend. Roosevelt not only held the State Department in disdain but he also loved to operate in secrecy, and believing

that the larger the staff the more difficult it would be to maintain his secrets, he preferred to use few advisors. But Winston Churchill, although he also believed that important diplomacy should be conducted without being subjected to public scrutiny, maintained his complete confidence in the discretion of his large staff of experts.

The conference was set for Casablanca in January 1943, not only to permit the participants to view the area of the British-American landings in North Africa, but also because the President did not wish to visit England "for political reasons." The reasons included his anti-colonial attitudes and that Hopkins had advised him that "the next major strategic move should not be made without consultation with Stalin," even though Stalin had twice refused to meet with the Allied leaders. Before Roosevelt arrived at the conference, the Combined Chiefs of Staff had made plans for the prosecution of the war during 1943, pointing out that the shortage of sea transport and providing aid to Russia were their greatest problems. While much concern continued over launching the Second Front in 1943, the British persisted in calling for peripheral Mediterranean attacks while the Americans insisted on a direct assault through France. Finally, it was agreed that since substantial Allied forces were already available in nearby North Africa, an assault on Sicily and Italy should force Mussolini's Fascist regime out of the war and gain Italian bases for bombing Germany. Otherwise, aside from the resolution of differences between the Free French forces in North Africa and the unexpected and calamitous pronouncement by Roosevelt of his policy of "unconditional surrender," few other important operational decisions were made at Casablanca..

Churchill came to Washington for the Trident Conference in May 1943 and again the invasion of Northern France was postponed. In the meantime, the Soviets announced that the Comintern was being dissolved in an obvious attempt to lead the Western Allies to believe world domination by Communism was no longer advocated. But when Stalin learned the Second Front had been postponed again, he charged Churchill and Roosevelt with bad faith. In fact, relations with the Soviet Union deteriorated so seriously that the Russian ambassadors at London and Washington were recalled, and once again fears of a Soviet-German separate peace were being circulated. Roosevelt, however, decided that he could re-establish good relations in a meeting with Stalin if Churchill were

not present, but Stalin deferred any meeting at that time. Still, the two Western leaders continued to call for a conference to build a better working relationship between the Allies.

When it appeared that Italy might drop out of the war, Roosevelt and Churchill met again at Quebec in August 1943. The invasion of Italy was set for the following month, and Italian representatives had informed the Allies that she would surrender and join the fight against the Germans if protected from German reprisals. At FDR's insistence, a major concern of the conferees involved the drafting of a joint declaration by the Four Powers for the establishment of an international organization for peace and security. And, in spite of Churchill's continuing objection to operations through France, the cross-channel Second Front was confirmed for May 1944. It was also finally agreed, at American insistence, that Operation ANVIL consisting of US and French forces would land about the same time in Southern France.

At Quebec, Harry Hopkins had produced an unattributed "military strategic estimate" which proved to be disastrously influential on Western political interests during World War II. In fact, adopted by Hopkins and Roosevelt, it became the basis for the American policies which led to the catastrophic results of the Tehran and Yalta Conferences. It was not an error or mistake but a willful decision clearly based on an intentional disregard of the principles on which the American democratic form of government had been historically based, and it was opposed to the best interests of the foreign policy of the United States and its Western Allies. It was Hopkins, a former social worker who handed out billions of dollars in social welfare payments during the American depression, who served as the principal, and often only, international advisor to the President of the United States. He and his free-wheeling associates had influenced and aided Franklin Roosevelt's determination to "save the world" with their naive and unrealistic belief that he could persuade the Red Marshal to set aside his dedication to world Communist domination to constructively cooperate with America and Britain to promote principles of democracy and freedom as a basic for future world peace and security.

It is argued that a cooperative coalition with the Soviets was necessary to defeat the Nazis and the fact that the Soviets would unavoidably occupy East Europe once victory was won, led Roosevelt to pursue what appeared to be

America's best interests at the time. The necessity for cooperation to defeat the world threat of the Nazis had to be recognized, they say, but the assumption in 1943 that the Soviets would dominate East Europe was totally in conflict with Roosevelt's conviction that the Soviets would cooperate in building a "free and democratic" world at the end of World War II. While it was true that by the time of the Yalta Conference, considering the concessions that had already been made to the Soviets, there was little that the United States and Britain could do to deny the Soviet possession of the liberated areas of Central Europe. But previously, before and during the Tehran conference, options were available to the United States for policies and strategies which would have impacted the world totally differently. If the attitude and actions of Roosevelt and Hopkins had been more realistic, if America had teamed up with the British with consultation and cooperation instead of opposition, if the United States had given more consideration to the British concern for the political aspects of the war, if FDR had utilized the considerable leverage of desperately needed military aid and food to obtain concessions from the Soviets, if the American President had supported Winston Churchill instead of Stalin, and if Roosevelt had not violated the very principles of independent self-government which he had so often grandly proclaimed, the goals of World War II could have ended with democratic governments in Germany and East Europe.

The Hopkins document, prepared in mid-1943 when the fierce German-Soviet struggle remained very much in doubt, totally ignored the options available to the United States in its wartime relations with the Soviet Union. It assumed there was little that America and Britain could do to deny the expansive postwar ambitions of Soviet Communism, the use of military aid to acquire and enforce political agreements was avoided, and it ignored the probability that at war's end a widely-destroyed and totally exhausted Russia, particularly without further aid from its former allies, would have no choice but to politically cooperate when confronted with the overwhelming military and economic superiority of the West. Instead, the theory presumed that the Soviets would be the dominant power in Europe with no other military force strong enough to oppose its position. That, however, was a totally flawed and incomplete supposition. Any number of events could have taken place, depending upon American policy, which would have made such a prediction unlikely. Especially

by not having proclaimed or by disavowing "unconditional surrender," the West could have conducted its military and political operations so that the surrender of Germany would have occurred while German forces were still in Russia. The German resistance to Hitler within Germany should have been assisted so that the Nazis would have been overthrown, the war would have ended, and a new government would have been installed before the occupation and dismemberment of Germany. As previously mentioned, the West could have used the threat of a separate peace with Germany, as Russia used it against the West, to have exacted Soviet political concessions. Information that the atom bomb was being developed could have been revealed to the Russians indicating the tremendous increase in power that would be available to the United States. There were any number of actions the West could have taken to avert such dire consequences for the principles and faith for which the Western nations had given the lives of millions of their finest young men in two world wars to achieve. The United States was clearly the strongest military and economic power in the world and it possessed great leverage, in implication if not in fact, to have effectively opposed the aggressive designs of the Soviet Union.

The so-called American "estimate of the situation" prepared by Hopkins began with the assertion that at the end of the war Russia would dominate Europe with no European power strong enough to challenge her. Consequently, since Russia would be the decisive force in the war, and the major power in Europe after the war, the West would have no choice but to give her all possible aid and to do whatever was necessary to gain and retain her friendship. But even more importantly, Russian participation would assure the earliest defeat of Germany with minimal loss of life and materiel. No consideration was given to the possibility of any other course of action. Why not the traditional spheres-of-influence for European balance? Roosevelt was opposed to "spheres-of-influence." In the interest of the democratic principles of the Atlantic Charter, why not a negotiated treaty with Germany, and a postwar coalition of a democratic Germany with Britain and France as a counterforce to Soviet Russia (as NATO was eventually established in Europe against Soviet aggression)? Instead, Franklin Roosevelt's proclamation of the "Grand Coalition" with Britain and Russia was maintained throughout the war and precluded any settlement

except "unconditional surrender" which merely assured a vacuum in Central Europe that could only be filled by Soviet Communism.

That was the most disastrous consequence of the personal conduct of the foreign affairs of the United States by Roosevelt and Hopkins during this critical period in world history. They not only generally ignored the Department of State, but they were contemptuous of the bureaucrats they considered to be little more than "cookie-pushers." They so distrusted States's abilities to maintain their confidence that they by-passed diplomatic channels using military communications for the negotiations between the Big Three. At one point, Hopkins even raised the issue of there being an "anti-Soviet clique" in the State Department while he raved about "how marvelous the Russians were in the war." Sadly for America, Roosevelt and Hopkins consistently refused to acknowledge warnings from experts on Soviet affairs about Russian duplicity and antipathy to freedom.

It is said that national political policy positions invariably assume a life of their own. They are often conceived in an effort to implement ideas which began as propaganda and are generally unobtrusive initially. For example, even when it was well known that Communism threatened democratic freedom throughout the world and was opposed by most Americans, when cooperation with the Communists was first proposed as a joint effort against the aggression of Nazi Germany, there was little public objection to the pursuit of a common cause. But in the process, liberals in the government, well-meaning citizens and the media, stimulated by Moscow-directed Communist propaganda, encouraged the belief that opposition to the political ambitions of the Soviets would threaten the defeat of Adolf Hitler. By the time the Soviet aims became self-evident, the Allied alliance with the Soviets had become "so fixed, accepted and obscured" that no effective alternative action remained other than military confrontation.

Following their QUADRANT meeting at Quebec, Roosevelt and Churchill considered it essential to meet with Stalin to create better understanding and cooperation between the "Big Three" for the successful prosecution of the war. It was agreed that they would meet with the Soviet Marshal at Tehran in November 1943 to discuss plans for the three major Allies to conduct the war and to pursue victory over the Germans, to coordinate cooperative efforts to obtain mutual goals, and to plan for the organization of peace and security after the war. However, no mention was made of preparations for meeting or avoiding the

serious complications that could be expected regarding the presence of Communist Russia in Central Europe after the defeat of Nazi Germany.

The President was very much concerned about the probability of a precedent-shattering fourth term in office in 1944. He was also aware of the importance of the American ethnic vote to his re-election and for the fulfillment of his program for winning the war and making the peace. The Germans were withdrawing before the counter-offensives of the Russians, which if sustained, would enable the Soviets to occupy all of East Europe. Substantial numbers of Americans from Poland and the Baltic states were particularly worried about their homelands and the approach of the USSR. The people in Poland, mindful of centuries of struggle with Russia, wanted assurances that their freedom would be respected since Soviet troops would likely occupy their country. They also wanted the reinstatement of democratic government and for Poland to be occupied and controlled by a Polish Army which would cooperate with the Russians. As a response, Roosevelt sent Secretary Cordell Hull to Moscow who was warned by Polish-Americans to be wary of Russian diplomacy. But, in spite of being ill, he mistakenly assumed that with the influence and the aid of the United States behind him, he could successfully negotiate Polish rights with the Soviets.

But Hull's Moscow meeting was a disaster. He was not permitted by the Russians to even discuss the Polish questions. They were only interested in commitments for more aid and a Second Front launched through France being strenuously opposed to Churchill's offensives through the Balkans. But consistent with the Roosevelt administration's domestic political policies, important events were always treated in optimistic terms while unfavorable developments were generally not revealed to the public. And, after the Moscow meeting (as with every conference with the Russians), only positive, constructive, and often inaccurate information was released which Roosevelt and his associates could justify as being necessary to maintain wartime public morale and continuing good relations with the Soviets. Furthermore, propaganda in war and peace usually avoids negatives and attempts to prevent everything in the best possible light. So Hull's meeting was reported to have been a great success. He was especially proud that he had obtained Soviet agreement for the Big Three to meet at Tehran. Roosevelt, of course, was delighted that he could at last meet with Marshal Stalin in the naive conviction that he could charm and gain the

cooperation and support of the Communist Secretary for his ideas for winning the war and for establishing world peace.

The President and the Prime Minister met at Cairo prior to the meeting at Tehran. Since Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek of China was present, considerable attention was directed at the Far East and the war with Japan. Usually nations go to the extreme of becoming involved in the terror of warfare only to protect or advance what they consider to be their vital interests. So the participants at Cairo were fighting different wars for different purposes. Great Britain was fighting for its life and that of its Empire. America was fighting against Nazi and Japanese aggression and the Chinese were fighting for survival against the Japanese. Unnecessary complications had arisen when FDR came out against British colonialism which offended British pride with its worldwide colonial possessions. Churchill had also been vigorously pursuing his belief that the Allies should strike Germany through the Balkans, not only as a shorter and more direct route to Germany, but it would also prevent the Russian occupation of Central Europe. Finally due to American persistence, Churchill agreed to a Second Front through France, but he continued to call for a stronger assault through Italy to hasten the defeat of Germany. The US Chiefs of Staff had expected Churchill to continue to press for a southern approach to Germany and that the "Americans and the Russians would form a united front" of opposition. Otherwise, little or no effort was made by the British and the Americans to consult on issues. It was also observed that there was little evidence of any special preparation or briefing of Roosevelt and Hopkins for the conferences at Cairo or Tehran.

Upon the arrival of the American delegation at Tehran, Stalin invited Roosevelt and his advisors to move into the Russian compound, which was certainly wired, and Roosevelt naively accepted. Even the servants and room cleaners were later described as "gun-toting members of the NKVD," and it can be assumed that bugging permitted the Soviets to know everything the Americans planned or discussed. Unfortunately, Roosevelt liked to "freewheel" through important meetings preferring to operate informally with no agenda while improvising without the position papers normally prepared by the State Department for consistency with the established best national interest. He felt he had no need for the advice of the Secretary of State nor for any high diplomatic official to join the delegation. Furthermore, he did not like to keep accounts of

his discussions and there are few records of his important conversations with Churchill and Stalin. Tragically, FDR was inexcusably uninformed about the background and record of Josef Stalin and the Soviet Union. US diplomat Charles Bohlen, who was at Tehran as an expert on the Soviets, called Roosevelt's ignorance "striking" and said that the President believed the Bolshevik takeover had been a "genuine revolution" by the oppressed Russian people, indicating that he had forgotten, or had overlooked, that the Soviets had been a revolutionary minority which had murdered the Czar and his family and seized control of Russia at the end of World War I.

When Stalin returned the President's visit, Roosevelt immediately attempted to obtain the Soviet leader's gratitude by offering him ships from America's huge merchant marine fleet at the end of the war. They then discussed the military situation on the Russian front, as well as in China and Syria. Next Stalin criticized General Charles DeGaulle and the French regarding Indochina and Roosevelt agreed while expressing his strong views against colonialism, even though he knew it greatly displeased the British. He also stated his insistence on trusteeships for colonies not ready for independence and, oddly enough, added that India needed reform from the "bottom" up—much as the Soviets would have claimed! However, in confidence, FDR warned Stalin not to bring the question of India up with Churchill. Beginning with his first meeting with Stalin, FDR had made it appear that they shared similar views against the imperialism of Britain and France claiming it was the cause of much of the world's conflict. It was obvious to the Communist Leader that the American President had decided that the Soviet Union, and not Great Britain, would be the most important partner for America regarding post-war world affairs. Furthermore, he realized that Roosevelt had decided that he was more important than Churchill regarding America's hopes and plans for the future.

At the first Tehran plenary session, Stalin and Churchill agreed that Roosevelt should preside which pleased the American President. He opened with the statement that their three nations would work in close cooperation not only through the war, but for "generations to come." Then he followed with an overview of American interests and pointed out that the United States was also bearing the principal burden of carrying on the war in the Pacific. Next, he commented on the European situation, which he considered to be the most important theater of

the war, and pointed out that Allied plans would place the greatest possible pressure on Germany for the relief of the Russian front. But, he added that the magnitude of the operation and the scarcity of sea transport had delayed the cross-channel OVERLORD attack to May 1944. Then, he said that although he had been against any secondary operations which might delay the Second Front, he and the British Prime Minister had discussed other possible operations in Italy and the Adriatic which might induce Turkey to enter the war with the Allies.

Stalin first spoke of the Pacific war indicating that Russia had not been able to become active against Japan because of her desperate struggle with Germany, but when Germany had been defeated, Russia would join in a "common front" to defeat Japan (another major "commitment" which was not kept until two days after the first atomic bomb had been dropped on August 6, 1945 at Hiroshima). Following a report on the Russian struggle, which was not as favorable as the Allies had been led to believe, Stalin refused to agree that additional Allied attacks in Italy would be useful since the Alps presented "an almost insuperable barrier." He said the Balkans were too far from Germany and that the only effective way of getting to Germany was through France. Ignoring the fact that he obviously opposed any actions that might interfere with Soviet ambitions for expansion in Europe, the American's welcomed Stalin's assistance in finally firming up the British commitment to a definite date for OVERLORD.

Churchill reported that he and the President agreed on the importance of the Second Front and that they planned to have more than a million men in France by July 1944. He pointed out that while the African and Italian operations were important, they had always been secondary to the cross-channel operation. Roosevelt added that he and Churchill had considered an operation across the Adriatic into Rumania to join up with the Russians, but Stalin quickly stated his opposition by saying it would be a mistake to weaken their efforts by dividing their forces. He strongly requested that OVERLORD should be the basis for all Allied operations during 1944, and that when Rome had been taken, the Italian campaign should be placed on hold while Allied forces were shifted to southern France. Furthermore, he emphatically stressed that coordinated attacks in northern and southern France would be far more effective than "scattering" Allied forces in the Mediterranean area. Surely by then, it should have been apparent that Stalin did not want any Allied forces to interfere with the Soviet occupation

and communization of Germany and Central Europe. Obviously, the Soviet leader was playing a "double game" by overstating his positions to find out just how far the Allies would go. And Roosevelt, contrary to all efforts by Churchill, continued to play into Stalin's hands. The British were very disturbed by the "obvious Russo-American entente" at Tehran. In fact, General Alan Brooke noted that "Stalin has got the President in his pocket."

The record shows that Roosevelt consistently endeavored to gain Stalin's favor throughout the conference. He knew that the Soviet leader preferred to deal with him rather than with Churchill. In fact, back in the Spring of 1943, Roosevelt had attempted to meet alone with Stalin, and Stalin had agreed, but when Churchill insisted that he also be present, Stalin dropped the idea. To the astonishment of both the Americans and the British at Tehran, in a plenary session Roosevelt suddenly volunteered that the American people would never agree for American troops to remain stationed in Europe after the war. On another occasion, while discussing with Stalin the interest of Baltic-Americans in the fate of their homelands, Roosevelt jokingly commented that he did not intend to go to war with Russia when her troops re-occupied the Baltic States. Unquestionably, it was the attitude of the American President which obviously confirmed Josef Stalin's belief that the only power capable of effective opposition against Russia would not resist Soviet continued occupation of the liberated East European states. Furthermore, it was Franklin Roosevelt who literally invited the Red leader to expand international Communism in the Far East when he voluntarily suggested that Russia might have access to the port of Dairen which he thought China would agree to make an international free port.

At the first dinner meeting of the conference, the conversation informally focused on the postwar treatment of Germany. Stalin said that the Soviets would assist Poland to move its pre-war border with Germany westwards to the Oder River which clearly revealed his intention to retain the Polish territory that had been taken over in collusion with Adolf Hitler. When the President commented on the need for a trusteeship to guarantee open navigation in the Baltic Sea, Stalin thought he had questioned the status of the Baltic countries and forcefully claimed the Baltic States wished to be a part of the Soviet Union. Nothing further was said about the Baltics. Generally speaking, Stalin believed the leaders of the West were inclined not to be sufficiently committed on German affairs to

prevent future Soviet aggressions and he forcibly advocated the dismemberment of Germany. At that point, after Roosevelt suddenly became ill and retired, when Churchill and Stalin continued their discussions, Churchill raised the Polish question by unexpectedly demonstrating with matches the new Polish borders to be taken from Germany and showed the Soviets retaining the area acquired from the Nazi-Soviet pact. Obviously, that indicated to Stalin that the Western leaders would go along with the Soviet occupation and dominance of Poland and the Baltics. Then again, Stalin repeated his questioning of the Allied "unconditional surrender" policy, saying that by not defining what it meant for the German people enabled the Nazis to continue its use to hold the German people together.

As the conference progressed, Stalin clearly saw that Roosevelt was determined to win his support and cooperation for the future by teaming up with him against Churchill. In fact, regarding Poland, Churchill and Stalin had determined that the Curzon line should be Russia's frontier with Poland and that Poland should be given part of Germany. Meanwhile, the President discarded any leverage he might have had on the fate of freedom in East Europe when he volunteered he could not involve himself in Polish affairs since it might lose him the Polish vote at home. Furthermore, his Atlantic Charter not withstanding, FDR indicated the United States would not forcefully oppose a Soviet occupation of the Baltic states. After having acceded to all of Stalin's major demands, the two Western leaders then invited the Red dictator to join them as one of the "four policemen" who would sponsor the world peacekeeping operation after the war. With nothing to lose and much to gain, and considering it as an opportunity to learn about and to oppose whatever the capitalists might be up to, Stalin readily accepted the recognition of the new status of the Soviet Union as one of the two great powers.

Even though Stalin had frequently admitted that Russia's war with Germany would have been lost without American aid, Roosevelt continued to make no effort to use the advantage to advance the legitimate interests of the West. And Stalin surely saw "inherent capitalist contradictions" as Roosevelt, on several occasions during the conference, made statements to Stalin which were damaging to Churchill and British interests. FDR also told Stalin of his low regard for the French. At the same time, he was careful not to appear to oppose the Soviets on issues, nor did he pursue those questions which might in any way antagonize

the Communist Marshal. Even when Churchill asked Roosevelt to have dinner with him at Tehran, since the President had dined with Stalin, Roosevelt refused on the grounds that he did not wish Stalin to think that he and Churchill were "ganging up" against him.

At another meeting between Roosevelt and Stalin without Churchill, FDR gave Stalin a memorandum regarding American planes to shuttle-bomb Germany from return bases in Russia, to base American bombers in Siberia for attacks against Japan, and to start preliminary planning towards Russian offensive operations against Japan after the surrender of Germany. Stalin warily agreed to study Roosevelt's proposals and, of course, never provided an agreement. The President also gave the Red Marshal an outline on his "United Nations" concept for international organization to preserve the peace. Regarding the suggestion that the major powers serve as the "Four Policemen" for the enforcement of peace, Stalin doubted that the small countries of Europe would approve and suggested regional committees with an European group to include the United States, Britain, Russia and another European nation. FDR then said such an arrangement might call for American troops, that Congress would never agree except in a truly world crisis, and that American forces would never have come to Europe in World War II had not the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. He also stated that if troops would be needed in Europe—they would have to come from Britain and Russia!

Again Stalin's conviction that the path was open for Soviet aggressions in Europe had been reassured. He saw that Britain was no longer a world power and that Roosevelt and the Americans were leaving the center of Europe open to the control and domination of the Soviet Union. Therefore, he made no objections to the first specifics for "multilateralism." Quite the contrary, it is clear that the Soviets understood that their participation as an equal world power in the promotion and preservation of international "peace" would be an incredible opportunity to propagate Communism throughout the world. It was also apparent that Russia would have inside knowledge and influence on world affairs rather than being outside running the risk that such actions might affect its vital interests. When Stalin again questioned the postwar treatment of Germany, he stated his firm belief that peace could only be maintained by the continued occupation of

military bases against Germany and Japan. Then Roosevelt closed the meeting saying he "agreed with Stalin 100%."

During the second plenary session, Churchill again stressed the importance of Allied actions in the Mediterranean area which might provide relief for Russia. Once again, Stalin repeated his position that of all military considerations, the USSR considered OVERLORD to be of first importance and that all military operations in the West should directly support it "as contrasted with diversionary operations in Italy or the Balkans." When Churchill asked Stalin what territorial designs he had, Stalin said "no need to speak now—when the time comes we will speak." Finally, Stalin challenged Churchill by asking if the British really believed in OVERLORD, and he overlooked no opportunity to needle the Prime Minister. Instead of coming to the aide of his valiant ally, Roosevelt seemed to enjoy it. Charles Bohlen, who attended every meeting between Roosevelt and Stalin at Tehran as well as Yalta, held that Roosevelt's determination not to join Churchill against Stalin was a basic error in understanding the true nature of the Soviet regime. Winston Churchill, feeling forced to accept the inevitable, assured Stalin Britain would place everything it could behind the Normandy invasion. Roosevelt then directed the Combined Chiefs of Staff to resolve all matters regarding the attack through Northern France "once and for all." Again, Roosevelt had sided with Stalin against Churchill, and the demise of freedom in Central Europe had become inevitable.

At the final plenary meeting, Roosevelt refused to participate in the discussion of the Polish frontiers from which emerged a settlement which was later accepted. When the subject of the dismemberment of Germany arose, it was Roosevelt who submitted a plan for the division of Germany into five separate states. Churchill agreed that Prussia and the southern states of Germany should be detached, but Stalin did not agree with either suggestion. He felt that Germany would always reunite and that if there was to be an international organization, it should be to prevent Germany from doing so. So, no action was taken on the important central issue of the dismemberment of Germany. Rather, it was merely referred to the European Advisory Commission of American, British and Russian experts at London for further consideration.

When Roosevelt and Stalin got together for their last visit, the Russian Premier was determined to get the Western leaders to recognize the Soviet-Polish

border acquired in the pact with Hitler, and he wanted a written acknowledgment covering the Soviet annexation of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. FDR proceeded to tell Stalin that an election was coming up, that he might have to run for President again if the war had not ended, and that there were 6-7 million Polish and many Balts all of whom could vote. Stalin suggested that some "propaganda work" was required. "Chip" Bohlen thought it had been a great mistake to tell Stalin that a position on Poland could not be taken because of an election which indicated that the United States would make no opposition to the Soviet Union's aggressive designs.

When the American President praised the conference at the final banquet, saying that he believed "in his heart...We leave here friends in fact, in spirit, and in purpose," the final deception had been completed. After the conference adjourned, although very little was accomplished to advance Western interests, Roosevelt was elated. He sincerely believed he had prevailed over Stalin. He felt sure that he could handle Stalin and that with the recognition of the Soviet Union's "rightful claims," it would be reasonable and cooperative in building a better and peaceful world. Robert Sherwood says it was the "supreme peak" of Roosevelt's and Hopkins' entire careers. Without a doubt, it was at Tehran that Josef Stalin won what would be his second most important battle of World War II. The President of the United States, known as "the champion of freedom and democracy," had been completely deceived and out-manipulated into giving the Russian dictator practically everything he considered vital for the future conquest of Europe by international Communism.

Furthermore, once again as at the Versailles Conference in 1919, three men had arbitrarily decided between them the future fate of the world with tragic consequences. The basic responsibility of a national leader, particularly of a world power, is to advance the best interests of his country through the successful political negotiation of its foreign affairs. Winston Churchill persistently attempted to apply every possible political angle to advance the vital long-term interests of the West. However, the American President succeeded in ignoring or side-tracking Churchill's efforts with his obvious courtship of the Red Marshal. Although the Prime Minister repeatedly resorted to his many persuasive abilities, Stalin "wielded his bludgeon with relentless indifference" while Roosevelt's contributions were, according to Sherwood, "infrequent and sometimes annoyingly

Stalin. He had already been convinced that the Soviets would be the major power in Europe after the war. But when he assumed, or permitted himself to be persuaded by questionable advice, that he could place his trust and negotiate in good faith with the brutal dictator of a state which was dedicated to the revolutionary overthrow of democratic freedom, it had to be much more than bad advice or a mistake, for it is difficult to find any explanation other than excessive egotism, incredible naivete or outright treachery!

Stalin also successfully exploited Roosevelt's dislike for British imperialism and Britain's concern over French power on the continent, and attempted to do whatever he could to remove potential obstructions to Russia's dominance of Europe. Of course, like almost everyone else, FDR knew what the goals of international Communism were including the Soviet Union's well-known intent to communize the world. He also knew of the terrible purges when millions of Russians were executed or imprisoned by Stalin. Again, Adolf Hitler had gained his ideas about the liquidation of the Jews by his observations of Stalin's extinction of millions of Russians in order to attain Soviet political objectives. As President, it was Roosevelt's particular responsibility to know everything of importance about the Soviet Union when he arbitrarily granted the highly controversial American recognition of the Soviet government in 1933. Unfortunately for America and the consequences of World War II, Harry Hopkins (whom FDR had promised to support for President in 1940, according to Robert Sherwood), became the most influential advisor in the formation and execution of Roosevelt's political decisions during the war. As FDR's first representative to visit Moscow, Hopkins rightly became a vigorous supporter of the Soviet struggle against the German invasion and convinced the President that vast quantities of aid had to be sent from America to help prevent a German victory. However, providing aid without imposing conditions became the undoing of the major purpose for which the West had fought the war.

Franklin Roosevelt's personal insistence on the total military defeat of Germany, without proper consideration of the resulting political factors, greatly prolonged the tragedies of the war. If he had not so vainly believed that his way was the only way, political realities could have been recognized, and the war could have been ended to permit new governments to takeover political control in Germany and the countries of East Europe before the arrival of Soviet troops.

Roosevelt also opposed Churchill's efforts to attack Germany through the Balkans, and it was FDR who agreed to the Allied landing in North Africa that had delayed the invasion of France by, at least, one year. Rather, if the Western forces had launched an attack through the Balkans instead of Italy, or had landed in France a year before Normandy, Germany would have probably capitulated while her troops were still fighting in Russia, and Germany and East Europe would not have been occupied by the Soviets—if Franklin Roosevelt had not insisted that no separate surrenders would be permitted.

General John Deane, American Military Representative to Moscow, had advised the President that the United States had the greatest possible leverage to get Russia to do almost anything it wished since the Soviets knew that a defeat by Hitler was certain without American military supplies and equipment. Yet no effort was attempted to obtain any concessions or agreements from the Russians as a condition for American assistance. Moreover, the Russians continued to play handball with the United States while the United States continued to let them have their way. Incredibly, Roosevelt also refused any American contact to encourage and assist the resistance in Germany to overthrow Hitler. At least, the Allies could have defined "unconditional surrender," as both Churchill and Stalin suggested, to point out that once the Nazi government was overthrown the German people would be treated fairly and a "free" Germany could be preserved. But Roosevelt refused to agree. The fact is, Franklin Roosevelt had made up his own mind as to what was best for the war and the peace, and like Woodrow Wilson, he was compelled to fulfill his own concept for peace. However, Roosevelt's "indiscriminate" faith in people and democracy was deceitfully exploited by an adversary who was dedicated to different values and objectives. His blunder was that not everyone's ideals were as noble, nor as naive, as were his. And World War II, like World War I, ended in one of history's greatest tragedies due largely to unrealistic American expectations.

Roosevelt's initial mistake, and ultimate catastrophe, occurred when the United States failed to exact a commitment from Russia to withdraw at war's end from the Polish areas seized by the Soviets in the infamous pact with Adolf Hitler. It should have been apparent to the President that only a temporary association of expediency against Hitler was possible between the democracies and an openly avowed and aggressive Communist government. It was extreme naivete.

political stupidity or treachery to ignore or overlook that the Communists were dedicated to world revolutionary conquest, and that throughout history war has been the major means of political change. It remains incomprehensible that it was possible for Roosevelt and his advisors to expect that the dedicated advocates of Communism would not fully exploit such an unexpected and incredible opportunity for the preservation and expansion of the Soviet ideology.

The British had not been so easily deceived. As the conference progressed, Churchill struggled valiantly to get Roosevelt and Stalin to sanction a Second Front through the Balkans as the most vulnerable route to Germany. But Roosevelt and his military advisors refused to agree and Stalin suspected Churchill's intentions and vigorously opposed him. However, both Churchill and Roosevelt failed to effectively resist Soviet demands for recognition of new frontiers in Poland, without Polish consent, which granted the Soviet Union its position of power and control in the center of Europe. By the time the Yalta conference occurred in early 1945, Russia had already occupied Poland and installed a Communist regime and the enslavement of Poland and East Europe had become a fait accompli. So it was at Tehran that Stalin learned, as former US National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski would say, that "the British would be unable and the Americans unwilling to oppose his larger designs."

Upon his return to Washington, Roosevelt announced his faith in the Soviet leader saying, "I believe he is truly representative of the heart and soul of Russia; and I believe that we are going to get along very well with him and the Russian people—very well indeed." FDR believed that his personal diplomacy had won a great victory and that his strategy of compromise in recognizing Russia's "legitimate claims and requirements" would be the only way of gaining the cooperation of the Soviets in maintaining peace in the postwar world. While post-conference assessments of the Tehran proceedings indicate that important military decisions were reached, none of the major political issues were settled. Still the President represented that the conference had been a great success. He believed he had accomplished his major goals by getting Stalin to go along with his plans for the United Nations and to enter the war against Japan. In addition, final agreements on OVERLORD had been completed, military cooperation between the Big Three had become a reality, and he was convinced that an Allied victory had been assured. Lastly, the President was convinced that the results of Tehran had been due to his

success in winning the friendship of the Soviet leader, and that once he had established personal relations with Stalin, "we talked like men and brothers." Even more importantly, he had concluded that his policy of trust and cooperation with the Soviets had been justified as indicated by Stalin's concessions of support for his initiatives during the conference. Roosevelt and Hopkins were elated.

Prior to the Tehran Conference, Lend Lease Expediter Averill Harriman informed Roosevelt that Stalin had showered more attention on Harry Hopkins than any other foreigner he had ever seen. It was Hopkins who had first persuaded Roosevelt that it was in America's interest to provide the support which played a decisive role in enabling the Russians to gain the offensive against the Germans before Moscow. And it was also Hopkins who greatly influenced the American President to do whatever was necessary to get along with the Soviets as the only way their cooperation could be gained for the successful implementation of FDR's new initiatives for multilateralism—the path to world peace to which Roosevelt and his advisors were committed. Bohlen confirms that Hopkin's influence was "paramount" at Tehran and that FDR largely excluded the advice of all other advisors.

No one could have been more pleased with the Tehran Conference than Stalin himself. He obtained everything of importance to Russia including the continued assurance of essential material aid against the Germans, an end to Churchill's efforts to attack through the Balkans, a definite commitment for the Second Front, and outright success in preventing British-American interference with the political objectives of the Soviet Union. It can be said that either Roosevelt played one of the most egotistical and naive roles in the history of foreign relations, or Josef Stalin conducted the most brilliant political deception ever perpetrated. Yugoslav author Milovan Djilas said Stalin told him that he had to be on guard with both Churchill and Roosevelt as with "a couple of pickpockets." Unquestionably after Moscow, Tehran was the Soviet's second greatest victory of World War II. Without the loss of a single soldier nor the firing of one shot, they had obtained the rights to the military and political control of Central Europe and, remarkably, immediately became one of the world's great powers..

Thus the fatal course of history was set at Tehran by Roosevelt and Stalin and would be finalized at Yalta. As Chester Wilmot characterizes it, "Even before Tehran it was inevitable that the enforcement of 'Unconditional Surrender'

would leave the USSR the dominant power in Eastern Europe, but it was by no means inevitable that Russian influence would extend deep into Central Europe and the Balkans...Thus the Tehran Conference...adjusted the political balance of post-war Europe in favor of the Soviet Union." Diplomat Bohlen's conclusion was that Russia would be "the only important military and political force on the continent of Europe" and that all other countries would be impotent. Robert Sherwood summed it up by saying:

> There was one fault in these two men (R&S) which was gloriously conspicuous by its absence, and that fault was hypocrisy, for all that was great and all that was regrettable in both of them stood out in such unmistakably bold relief that no mask could be thick enough or pliable enough to cover it. Roosevelt now felt sure that, to use his own term, Stalin was 'getatable,' despite his bludgeoning tactics and his attitude of cynicism toward such matters as the rights of small nations, and that when Russia could be convinced that her legitimate claims and requirements—such as the right to access to warm water ports—were to be given full recognition, she would prove tractable and co-operative in maintaining the peace of the postwar world.

Without question, Franklin Roosevelt believed that he had served the American people well and that it was his responsibility and his prerogative, particularly in view of his widely-acclaimed success as leader of the world's greatest power, to decide what was best for the United States and for world peace without other's advice and consent. Biographer Ted Morgan says that FDR considered himself to be "an expression of the collective American will, and America had God on its side...and therefore God was with him." Others have pointed out that it was his inherent sense of self-righteousness, arising from his Anglo-Saxon-Dutch Protestant background, that had given him "an aristocratic attitude of benevolent charity towards others and the conviction that his way was the right way."

But Roosevelt, with Churchill more or less required to go along as a dependent partner, committed the inexcusable blunder of thinking that merely because the Soviets were fighting desperately to defend their own country against Nazi aggression, they would become champions of world peace and freedom at war's end. Furthermore, it was sheer nonsense for anyone at Tehran to have assumed that once the Soviets occupied East Europe and part of Germany, that free non-

Communist governments would continue to exist and that the Soviets would voluntarily vacate the occupied states once peace was established. Furthermore, it was totally ridiculous for the democracies of the West to have expected that the new Communist "superpower" would cooperate in the post-war democratic concept and organization of world peace when it was clearly known that the major purpose of international Communism involved the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist states throughout the world. Russian author Alex de Jonge emphatically states that the Western leaders "misread Stalin quite as badly as they misread Hitler and had less excuse for their mistake."

Prior to the meeting at Tehran, the President had decided that his most important mission was to gain Josef Stalin's support for his United Nations proposal and that Russia's participation was needed to win the war against Japan. Consequently, Roosevelt's determination to "go along" with Stalin at the conference permitted the Red dictator to pursue, with little opposition, the policies and actions which ultimately led to the disastrous struggle between the free world and Soviet Communism after the war. So it was at Tehran, and not at Yalta, that the Cold War and the almost fifty-year worldwide struggle between democracy and Communism was disastrously imposed upon so much of mankind.

The fact was that instead of having his way at Tehran, FDR enabled the avowed enemy of America's capitalistic society to have its way as it unexpectedly became a great triumph for Communist Russia and for its resultant worldwide status as a recognized superpower. The President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Great Britain had politically treated the leader of the Communist world revolution as an equal and had assisted him to accomplish his major objectives with a commitment for the Second Front, recognition of the advance of Soviet territorial aims, an absence of effective opposition regarding his aggressions, time to set his convenience and goals for the Soviet intervention in the Pacific war, and assurance of no obstructive American military presence in Europe after the war to deter Soviet ambitions. The fact was that Stalin cynically refused to permit Soviet cooperation with the West even when it was critically needed for the survival of Russia, nor to change his basic foreign policy aims which he knew would benefit from the "weakening and exhaustion" of the inevitable future struggle between the non-Communist powers.

The same disastrous error was made by Franklin Roosevelt at Tehran that Neville Chamberlain committed at Munich. After having appeased the Nazi dictator, the British Prime Minister naively placed his faith in Adolf Hitler saying, "I got the impression that here was a man who could be relied on when he had given his word." British Foreign Officer William Strang said that Chamberlain at Munich "was not well versed in foreign affairs, that he had no touch for a diplomatic situation, that he did not realize what he was doing and that his naive confidence in his own judgment and powers of persuasion was misplaced." Otto Friedrich observed that Chamberlain "believed, as it would turn out—in reason and trust" and that he "had no experience in dealing with a man like Hitler; he could not imagine such a violent, capricious will, such guile and deceit." While Neville Chamberlain naively and tragically assumed that his compromises had preserved the peace, they resulted in five years of mankind's most horrible catastrophe. Franklin Roosevelt's most disastrous blunder involved his appeasement of the Soviet dictator which, although inspired by his dream of international cooperation for peace, resulted in almost fifty more disastrous years of death and destruction in the worldwide conflict between freedom and Communism.

Chapter 9

The Mediterranean Campaigns

The Allied campaigns in the Mediterranean area had several important objectives: to defeat the German-Italian forces in North Africa; to commit American military resources to the European war at the earliest possible date; to force Italy out of the war; and to draw German military forces away from the Russian front and the invasion of Normandy. In reality, however, it became the longest, costliest and most controversial Allied ground campaign of the war. The fact that it was the first and most extended operation of Allied coalition warfare cannot justify the errors, mistakes and blunders, as well as the envy, ego, jealousy and incompetence which plagued the Mediterranean campaigns. Its numerous critical failures of command consumed huge Allied resources of troops, caused heavy casualties, lost the major benefits of Italy's surrender, and blocked the decisive defeat of the German Wehrmacht in Sicily and in Italy. Consequently, inexcusable deficiencies in leadership and execution of operations permitted a crippled and poorly equipped enemy to repeatedly hold up the Allies' overwhelming superiority of men and arms in one of the most successful military withdrawals of the war.

Indeed, the Allied campaigns in the Mediterranean area revealed what would become a consistent struggle between the British and the Americans over the control of military strategy which would affect post-war conditions in Europe, as well as the defeat of the German-Italian Axis. Strong disagreements and continued bickering, mostly from the British side, characterized the conflicting views as to the best means to apply Allied resources for the earliest defeat of enemy resistance in Europe with a minimal loss of Allied troops and materiel. Unfortunately, instead of building unity for the planning and execution of successfully coordinated campaigns, vanity and national pride led to strong misunderstandings which impacted unfavorably on the maintenance of Allied cooperation, as well as

the efficient prosecution of the war. John Ellis observed that the operations "were always a bone of contention and their overall direction was beset by bitter disagreement, grudging compromise, petulant threats, and, on one side at least, a deeply-held suspicion, which still persists, of having been had."

The problem was that the Americans, having available vast numbers of men and almost unlimited supplies of war materials, saw the Allied task as a simple strategy of applying the greatest possible force in the most direct way against Germany and Japan to end the war quickly with the lowest casualties possible. But the British, short of both men and supplies, believed their greater experience entitled them to determine and to command Allied strategy. More than anything, they feared being bogged down in the deadly World War I type trench warfare, and in accordance with their limited resources, strenuously argued that "flexible peripheral operations" were better suited to the situations and opportunities faced by the Allies. Additionally, they were already heavily involved in the Middle East and, after the Battle of Britain, their struggle in North Africa had remained as their only active campaign in the European area.

The Americans, however, heavily engaged in meeting manpower and resource demands for undertaking successful campaigns both in the Pacific and in Europe, were greatly concerned about the struggle in Russia. President Roosevelt felt compelled to respond to Marshall Stalin's urgent pleas to launch the "Second Front" to relieve German pressure in the East. The prospect that the Nazis might defeat the Soviets appeared to be too horrible to even contemplate. If that should happen, FDR knew, Britain would be lost and the United States would be left practically alone in a long, desperate and costly struggle against most of a world controlled by the Nazis and the Japanese. It was a distressing possibility in a desperate struggle which appeared to be very much in doubt.

In the spring of 1942 the Americans had been led to believe that the British had agreed to a preliminary cross-channel operation before the end of the year. The fact was, however, that the British had already decided that an invasion of France in 1942 was out of the question, so it was not until later that the Americans learned that their coalition partner would only agree to begin the build-up for a continental assault in 1943. The British also continued their preference for operations in the Mediterranean and, had they been more forthcoming about their views regarding coalition operations, better relations between the

military partners would have surely assured a greater degree of success in Allied operations and an earlier defeat of their opponents. Instead, American confidence in the attitudes of their co-partner had been damaged which increased their lack of interest in Britain's historic concerns about the Middle East. Actually, as soon as the United States became involved in the war, Winston Churchill had begun his efforts to convince President Roosevelt of the importance of Allied operations in the Mediterranean area. When Churchill met Roosevelt at the ARCADIA Conference at Washington in December 1941, he was very much concerned about the tragedy of the British attack at Dieppe, and suggested that rather than risk another catastrophic failure with an attack on Hitler's "Fortress Europa," the Allies should takeover French North Africa.

Obviously, Britain knew its survival greatly depended upon the aid of the United States and that it was necessary to conserve its limited manpower. Naturally with its traditional background, its concepts of strategy and its political interests could be expected to differ widely from those of the Americans. But once a decision had been made by the alliance, there was no justification for the jealousy, criticism and dissension that was consistently demonstrated by high-ranking British officials and commanders. Their superior attitude and disagreeable conduct began to escalate during the Mediterranean campaigns and, unfortunately, carried over into the cross-channel attack and the final assault on Germany. Although Dwight Eisenhower's choice for the over-all command of Allied operations was clearly in the best interest of cooperative and interdependent operations for an early Allied victory, yet Britain's Chief-of-Staff Alan Brooke, Secretary of State for War P.J. Grigg and General Bernard Montgomery, by their jealousy and dissension inexcusably created conditions of confusion and disruption which greatly harmed and delayed the pursuit of victory in Europe.

In North Africa, Great Britain had quite easily managed to overcome the threat to its well-established interests in the area by Fascist Mussolini's second-rate Italian forces. But when Adolf Hitler rushed General Erwin Rommel's forces to Africa to save the remnants of Italy's decimated and unequipped troops, Britain's rapid advances quickly turned into disastrous retreats. Rommel's superior tactics had driven the British Eighth Army back across the Egyptian border in a series of defeats and, finally, Winston Churchill intervened in a desperate attempt to save the interests of Britain's Empire from a serious Nazi threat. Then General Bernard

Montgomery was given command of the Eighth Army which had been greatly reinforced with troops, guns, new American tanks and the total domination of the air by the RAF. Meanwhile, the greatly over-matched and crippled Africa Corps, operating from its long supply line across North Africa, had been reduced to a critical shortage of fuel and tanks. By the time Montgomery had accumulated the substantial "preponderance of force" (which appeared to be a necessity for all his future offensive actions), the historic Battle of El Alamein got underway. At the beginning Montgomery had over 1,000 tanks and Rommel had only 200 gun-armed tanks with practically no fuel. Clearly, Monty's failure to pursue the Africa Corps immediately after the British victory was a blunder of the highest order. In fact, British author Corelli Barnett convincingly argues that the battle was of itself a great blunder and need never have been fought. As he says, the Allied TORCH landings in North Africa would have caused the Africa Corps to withdraw making the Battle of El Alamein unnecessary.

Since the British navy and air forces had successfully cut off almost all of the German reinforcements and supplies, with only a handful of tanks and practically no fuel left, Rommel's Africa Corps had no choice but to retreat in spite of the Fuehrer's order to "fight to the last man." Meanwhile, Montgomery, in a pattern of over-caution which typified his generalship throughout the war, and in spite of his overwhelmingly superior forces, had failed to pursue his defeated enemy for a total victory at El Alamein, and Rommel was permitted to continue his brilliant fighting withdrawal for some 2,000 miles. In fact, the final victory in North Africa had been delayed for six months until the Eighth Army had joined up with American reinforcements to finally force the Germans and Italians out of North Africa.

Still the outcome of the struggle in North Africa proved to be a dramatic turn-around for Allied fortunes in late 1942. Importantly, the British had won their desperately needed first ground battle against the Germans, the Soviets had begun to gain the initiative on the Eastern front, and the myth of the invincibility of Hitler's forces of aggression had been ended. Furthermore, as the first joint Allied operation of the war, the TORCH landings had successfully taken place in North Africa in November 1942. At last, coalition warfare had become operative, the Western Front became a reality, and the two-front war against Germany

had gotten underway which would, hopefully, significantly draw German forces from Russia and France and hasten the defeat of the Axis European partners.

But the enthusiastic rush into battle by the inexperienced Americans after the successful TORCH landings at Casablanca, Oran and Algiers had resulted in an embarrassing setback at Kasserine Pass which left unfavorable consequences for Allied relations. British officials claimed the Americans had acted rashly and unprofessionally, and some observers considered the faux pas at Kasserine to have been the worst defeat for the Americans in World War II. Many high-ranking British officers were critical of their new and inexperienced partner who, so abundantly supplied with men and materials, had entered the fighting on the final days of the long-fought defeat of the Africa Corps. Consequently, the superior attitude of the British which often accompanied their criticism, was greatly resented by the Americans and, unfortunately, would affect much of British-American relations throughout the war. Thereafter, Allied cooperation and leadership became flawed in numerous important instances at the higher levels of command which became the basis for some of the most important blunders of World War II. And nowhere would coalition difficulties be more pronounced and have a more disastrous impact than in the Sicily and Italian campaigns which would follow North Africa..

Even more importantly to the fate of British-American relations, the on-going dispute about the American supported priority for an early cross-channel attack, and the insistence of Winston Churchill and General Brooke upon operations against the Germans in Southern Europe, continued to be intense and even bitter at times. The Americans continued to push for the most direct and shortest attack across France to Berlin and the British persisted in arguing that Germany's defense should first be weakened by, as Churchill put it, blows to the "soft underbelly of Europe." The conflict dominated Allied military relations for months until Roosevelt suddenly surprised his military leaders by giving in to the British in support of a largely American invasion of North Africa. Most American historians contend it was a critical blunder which postponed the cross-channel assault. They point out that the "Atlantic Wall" was totally a myth of Hitler's propaganda, that had the troops and transportation been used at Normandy in 1942, Germany would have been assaulted when its forces had begun to have a difficult time in Russia, and that Germany's defenses in the west would have been weak

and vulnerable. Instead, FDR's decision against his military advisors committed American involvement in the highly controversial, costly and indecisive Mediterranean operations which proved to be a dominant but largely unrewarding burden upon the Allies to the end of the war.

The TORCH landing in North Africa, thereby, would prove to be an unfortunate and disappointing beginning for the American participation in the European theater of operations. It delayed the invasion of France by a year or more and provided the Germans with another year and a half to build and strengthen the Atlantic Wall. It tied up substantial British and American military resources in North Africa, Sicily and Italy that could have been much more beneficially used for an attack against the western continent of Europe that surely would have ended the war sooner. Most importantly, it would have eliminated some of the major causes of friction within the coalition and greater mutual respect and cooperation would have existed between Allied commanders. And unquestionably, an earlier and stronger attack in western Europe would have been of great assistance to the critical struggle of the Soviets against the Germans in the East.

But once the British got Roosevelt committed to TORCH, Churchill believed he had the Americans just where he wanted them. With substantial American forces ashore in North Africa, at the Casablanca Conference in January 1943 it appeared only logical that the next offensive should involve an attack on Sicily, which the British believed would logically be followed by an invasion of Italy. Still the Americans insisted it had been agreed that all Allied operations would be subordinated to the cross-channel attack as soon as it could be mounted. Disagreements continued and cooperation suffered to the point that no determination of policy or strategy was made by the military chiefs at Casablanca, even though Roosevelt and Churchill had agreed to get operations in France underway before the end of 1942. Many believed that the Prime Minister had won his every effort to successfully manipulate the President by gaining commitments for aid to Britain; bringing America into the war against Germany; and lastly, involving the United States in the Mediterranean campaigns in support of Britain's Mid-East interests.

In the meantime, Britain and America agreed that plans for the invasion of the continent would continue and designated the operation as ROUNDUP later

changed to OVERLORD. The date for the main assault was set for the spring of 1943 to include thirty American and eighteen British divisions. Operation SLEDGEHAMMER had been previously scheduled to occur in September 1942 and involved a limited operation to be launched only if the threat of a Russian collapse appeared imminent, or as an emergency sacrifice for the "common good." Subsequently, SLEDGEHAMMER was added as a contingency to be used to seize a bridgehead on the continent to be held until adequate American resources could be built-up in Britain for an invasion of France.

At Casablanca in January 1943, Roosevelt had made a critical mistake by permitting only a small American military delegation to attend the conference which the British had quickly turned to their advantage while Churchill worked on the President. Britain's priorities were to protect their interests in the Middle East by driving the Germans out of North Africa, to capture Sicily, and to invade Italy to force the Italians out of the war, as well as to draw forces away from the Russian front and the Atlantic Wall. Critics blame Roosevelt for the "disarray" at Casablanca, claiming he was preoccupied with his own agenda which included the infamous "unconditional surrender" formula. They also said it was part of his concentrated campaign to charm "Uncle Joe" Stalin into supporting his plan for a "United Nations" for future world peace. Consequently, the Americans were totally unprepared to deal with the British offensive for their own objectives in the Mediterranean area.

Once the advance of the combined British and American forces had surrounded and eliminated the Africa Corps in North Africa, the Allies had to face the choice of sending their troops and equipment back to England to prepare for the invasion of France, or to use the forces already in North Africa to mount Operation HUSKY against nearby Sicily. Unfortunately, the absence of an agreement regarding the next offensive after the capture of Sicily led to great difficulties for combined Allied operations, particularly for the subsequent Italian campaign. In planning Operation HUSKY, British officers had been imposed as the commanders-in-chief for ground, sea and air. That, according to Carlo D'Este, placed the new inexperienced Supreme Commander Dwight Eisenhower in the position of being a "chairman of a committee of 4," which not only proved to be ineffective, but became the basic difficulty that plagued Allied operations both in Sicily and Italy where the commanders generally acted independently. In

effect, Anglo-American compromises on strategy for Operation HUSKY resulted in a fatally flawed form of coalition warfare. Eisenhower had only minimal control over his subordinates. Furthermore, the "likable but ineffective" overall land commander General Harold Alexander would prove to be incapable of controlling two of the greatest prima donnas of World War II—Bernard Montgomery and George Patton.

Since troops would be drawn from Britain as well as from North Africa for the Sicilian operation, five separately located operational planning centers were utilized which resulted in much confusion with little coordination between land, sea and air commands. Even worse, estimates of Italian-German forces in Sicily were greatly exaggerated and the potential power of Allied military forces was greatly underrated. Still, had the assault been launched without unjustifiable delays, a great Allied victory complete with the destruction or capture of most of the German forces could have been attained. Instead, it was said that what should have been a expeditious and successful campaign was largely botched by "faulty planning, inefficient execution, unfounded dissension, prejudiced attitudes, and the desire for egotistical glory." Furthermore, Operation HUSKY and the Italian campaign which followed were characterized as being "a disgraceful demonstration of petty vanities, supervisory stupidity, wasteful resources, unconscionable casualties, and much of the worst Allied generalship of World War II." Too many errors, mistakes and blunders made it the longest, most difficult and highly disputable campaign of the war.

It was clearly obvious that a successful assault on the northeastern coast of Sicily would cut-off the escape of enemy forces across the Strait of Messina to the Italian mainland. Incredibly, such an initiative was abandoned in the belief that heavy German forces in the area would put up a costly defense. Indeed, it was feared that such an assault, so close to Italy itself, would infer an invasion of the mainland which had not yet been agreed upon by the Combined Chiefs of Staff. As a result, excessively cautious planning eliminated the opportunity for a dramatic victory for the Allies which would have saved many lives, shortened the Italian campaign, and given greater relief to the Soviets. To quickly cut-off the German retreat from Tunisia, at Casablanca the American Chiefs had urged a quick strike before defenses could be built-up in Sicily. At that time, there were only about 5,000 German troops in Sicily and an Allied invasion could have

been successful with a relatively small landing force. However, General Eisenhower believed it would have been too risky. But, in spite of substantial knowledge of enemy actions and intentions provided by ULTRA, and Allied intelligence indicating the weakness of enemy defenses in Sicily, powerful Allied forces made the mistake of being overly cautious in undertaking oncoming offensive operations. By mid-April 1943, Sicily had become accepted as the most likely target for the Allies, and by then, the German defenses had been substantially reinforced.

With British commanders controlling land, sea and air operations, initial plans for an attack on Sicily gave Montgomery, the "Hero of El Alamein," the prime opportunity for another dramatic victory before the German divisions could escape to the mainland from Messina. Preceded by British Airborne drops, three divisions of Montgomery's famous Eighth Army would land in southeastern Sicily. To the west, advance units of the US Seventh Army would go ashore followed by another American landing at Palermo. But the over-cautious Montgomery flatly refused to carry out Alexander's plan claiming that separate landings would eliminate mutual support and would create a gap as an invitation for a counterattack. The navy had insisted on certain ports, the air forces demanded airfields, and both called for a dispersion of force. Actually, no one liked the plan indicating the folly of conducting war by a committee. But both Monty and the planners grossly erred in concluding that the Italians would fight "desperately" for Sicily. Consequently, over-caution and poor use of abundant resources deprived the Allies of a spectacular victory. And, when Montgomery insisted that Patton should protect his left flank instead of landing at Palermo, he unwittingly deprived himself of the victory.

Later, it was learned that more than two German divisions might be in Sicily, but Churchill and the Combined Chiefs insisted that the assault go forward as planned. In the meantime, agreements on the implementation of operations were never worked out, Alexander was indecisive, and Ike was unable to get his subordinate commanders to agree. Claiming that the Italians in North Africa had shown "stout resistance," Montgomery predicted they would fight "desperately" in Sicily. By then, planning had become such a hotly contested dispute among the commanders that Admiral Andrew Cunningham, Air Marshal Arthur Tedder and General George Patton had developed an intensive dislike for Bernard

Montgomery which persisted throughout the remainder of the war. In fact, doubts and lack of enthusiasm by the Allied commanders created a distractive and negative influence on the effectiveness of the most important Allied military operation to occur in the war up to that date. Even worse, during the planning process Alexander lost all control of the operation.

Soon both Washington and London became impatient over the deadlock so Ike had no alternative but to accept Monty's changes. The Palermo landing was eliminated, one of Patton's Seventh Army divisions was moved adjacent to the British in the Gela area, and the other American division was placed in reserve. In effect, Monty had moved the Americans to protect his left flank and relegated Patton to a secondary role without a specific mission. He thought he had given his triumphant Eighth Army another "road to glory" as it raced to Messina to cut off the enemy. Then, in an amazingly brazen grab for power, Monty attempted to have himself replace Alexander as the commander of all British and American ground forces in HUSKY. Later, it was said that a unified command under Monty would have brought order and success to Allied operations. The record, however, of his conduct and performance in Sicily, as well as in Italy, indicates that even far greater difficulties would have occurred. While it was a tragedy that Alexander failed to provide the decisive leadership that was necessary, with Montgomery in command of all ground operations, the remaining Mediterranean campaigns would have been in even greater difficulties. Unfortunately, under the final British structure of command, there was no alternative available which could have greatly altered the tragedy of the subsequent Allied operations. While the obvious major objective was to take Messina and prevent the escape of the enemy, Alexander mistakenly decided to see how the battle proceeded before giving orders for specific objectives which became the main cause of most of the problems that followed.

Final plans called for the Eighth Army to go ashore between Syracuse and Pozzallo with four divisions and a brigade with the 1st Airborne beginning on July 10. The American Seventh Army's mission was to assault the Gulf of Gela area from Licate to Pozzallo with its main landings at Gela, Scoglitti and Cape Scarmina. A smaller force would go ashore at Licata aimed primarily at taking its airfields and those at Ponte Olivo, and Comiso while protecting Montgomery's left flank from attack. With Allied naval forces supporting the landings of the

Eastern and Western task forces, the invasion operation had become an extremely complicated undertaking due to the great distances involving troops from the United Kingdom, a complicated and cumbersome command structure, and the heavy deployment of troops, ships, landing craft, weapons, vehicles and supplies when only limited transport and landing craft were available.

But the greatest difficulty of the entire operation involved the inability of the air forces to reach an agreement with the army and the navy. Samuel Eliot Morison believed that the Air Force wanted "to fight its own war." But the ground commanders found that the air plans for bombing and support were unacceptable. They were distressed that there were no detailed plans as to how the air missions would be accomplished. Generally, as in North Africa, the air commanders resented most efforts to utilize air power in support of ground operations, particularly since they were generally convinced that air power alone would win the war. Air Marshal Tedder remained adamant, as he would later in Normandy, that the capture of airfields to permit landings and refueling of fighter aircraft was the highest possible priority, and was more important than providing air cover for the assault landing forces or the interdiction of any retreating German forces across the Messina Strait.

The most shocking error of the operation, however, involved the refusal of the airmen to make available to the navy the flight paths of the planes carrying the airborne forces. They were not supportive of the airborne operations and believed there would be heavy losses of their aircraft and crews since the navy could not assure them that there would be no losses from friendly fire. When the air routes were finally released, it was too late for adequate warnings to be effective. Generally there was much bickering in all quarters because there was dissatisfaction with plans which almost everyone in authority believed to be flawed. The blame was placed on a lack of centralized planning, differences in American and British procedures, the absence of opportunities to effect compromises and to work out problems, too much military bureaucracy, and inadequate interpretation of military intelligence.

Regarding the defenders, although the Italian Sixth Army had occupied Sicily since 1941, little was done to protect the island until it became apparent that the Germans would be defeated in North Africa. In February 1943 the Italian central military control had correctly concluded that the Allies would attack Sicily in the

area where the assault occurred, and German General Albert Kesselring also believed the Allies would attack the southeast corner of Sicily. Since Adolf Hitler distrusted the Italians and suspected that the Italian army might attempt to surrender to the Allies, most of the 15th Panzers were moved from the mainland to the western part of Sicily.

Taking advantage of its Alpine barriers, the Germans naturally sought to keep the enemy as far from their borders as possible. Hitler also believed the Allies were incapable of maintaining a new offensive in the Mediterranean area when he knew that preparations for a "Second Front" against his "impregnable" Atlantic Wall were being undertaken. His strategy, therefore, was based on maintaining the strongest possible defense in the Channel area while depending upon the mountainous regions of Italy and the Balkans to discourage any additional offensives in southern Europe. Thus the defense for Sicily included the placement of screening forces near the beaches backed up by mobile reserves. Four Italian divisions and two German divisions were available but a critical shortage of transport and Allied air supremacy would make movements difficult and costly. Also, after years of military inactivity, the Italian divisions were in very poor condition and could not be relied upon for effective resistance. Obviously, the so-called defenses were inadequate and the Germans knew it would be impossible to hold such a long and undefended coastline.

Meanwhile, the transfer of German reinforcements was being held up by confusion and indecision by Adolf Hitler who had begun to fear the defection of Italy. Still, doubts over the capability and reliability of the Italians, increased the necessity of stronger German resistance. By July 1943, the Luftwaffe Herman Goering Division was transferred from France with two panzer grenadier regiments and a company of the new monster Tiger tanks, and the 15th Panzer Grenadiers were placed in the west, center and east as a reserve. The Italian commander Alfredo Guzzoni wanted both German divisions in the east as a fully mobile reserve but, fortunately for the Allies, he was ignored. At the same time, the 26th and 29th Panzer Grenadiers were moved into southern Italy. Realistically, the 200,000 or more Italians and up to 40,000 Germans, with practically no naval forces and air cover, could hardly be expected to successfully resist a massive Allied invasion. In fact, the Italian soldiers were already thinking about surrender and even the

morale of the German troops had greatly deteriorated by the recent first defeats of the Wehrmacht on both the North African and Russian fronts.

Before midnight on July 9, the British Airlanding Brigade consisting of 2,075 men in gliders were towed over the Allied fleet awaiting H-hour to invade Sicily. The mission for Operation LADBROOKE was to capture the all-important Ponte Grande bridge near Syracuse. When the operation was first proposed, the leader of the glider forces was shocked to learn that the landing sites were covered with large stones, surrounded by cliffs and crossed by stone walls. Even worse, his pilots had not been trained for night landings nor had there been adequate practice between the tow pilots and the glider pilots, particularly on operations with gale force winds. Nor had the glider pilots been qualified to judge distances across water to a shoreline and the tow pilots were not proficient in night navigation. So when the Airborne Force took off from airfields in Tunisia, there was considerable and widespread unease about the chances of success for LADBROOKE.

When the gliders reached the Sicily coast through 30-35 mile headwinds, anti-aircraft fire from the enemy caused the planes to take evasive actions which led to much confusion as planes and gliders broke out of formation. Some of the tow pilots released their tows too soon causing many crashes into the sea. Other gliders could not detect their landing zones due to smoke from the AA-guns and the Italian flares which blinded the pilots. Soon the aerial convoy had become a maelstrom as planes and gliders flew in all directions. Worst of all, the glider pilots did not know where they were and some of the gliders were fired upon by Allied ships. Of the 147 gliders 69 with 252 men were lost in the sea, 59 crash-landed over a 25-mile area between the tip of Sicily and Syracuse, 10 returned to Tunisia, and 2 were shot down. While only 12 landed at the target area, the small force quickly created confusion and havoc among the Italian coastal troops. By daylight, some 87 men managed to get to the Primasole Bridge to form a defensive force and, after being driven off by a much larger Italian force, the bridge was recaptured by advancing Eighth Army ground units. But Operation LADBROOKE was largely a waste of lives and airborne resources since the Italian defenders in the area quickly ran away or surrendered. Furthermore, the operation was badly handled and British airborne leaders were particularly furious with the 51st USAAF Troop Carrier Wing and charged them with cowardice before the enemy.

To the west, 3,045 paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne were to be dropped northeast of Gela in the first Allied night airborne operation, but it became an inexcusable disaster. The objective was to establish aerial landing facilities at Caltagirone and the surprise landings were expected to be successful against substantial enemy resistance. But again inexperience and strong winds took their toll. Night-time navigation was poor, aircraft were driven off course by anti-aircraft fire, smoke and haze and lost bearings caused great confusion, and planes dumped their loads wherever they could. Paratroopers were scattered over vast areas of Sicily and only one unit landed intact some twenty-five miles from its target. Worst of all, expecting only second-rate Italian opposition, the attacking American force landed in an area defended by the notorious Hermann Goering division.

Incomprehensibly, it was known from ULTRA that the elite enemy force was in the area but, for security reasons, it was feared American captives might be forced to reveal information relating to ULTRA, and the information was deliberately withheld from the 82nd Airborne. On the other hand, the US 1st Division was informed without any damaging effect. Nonetheless, the widely dispersed and aggressive actions by numerous bands of paratroopers resulted in substantial confusion and disruptions which convinced the enemy they were being attacked by vastly superior forces. Still the execution of the first major Allied airborne operation of the war was a disaster that was branded as "the best executed snafu in the history of military operations."

Meanwhile, Monty had expected and thoroughly prepared for strongly-resisted landings, but the beach areas were not only held by totally deficient Italian troops, they had no intention of fighting. The British easily got ashore with 1,517 casualties instead of Montgomery's estimated 10,000. Still many difficulties occurred involving high winds and heavy seas with delays and landings at wrong areas. Generally, however, the Italian resistance was relatively quickly brushed aside with substantial advances and it appeared that Operation HUSKY would be another great victory. Montgomery was delighted.

The US Seventh Army also got ashore successfully at the Gulf of Gela under generally similar conditions. After advancing some seven miles inland, the 45th Division quickly occupied the Comiso airfield with 125 German aircraft, and Vittoria and Sante Croce Camerina surrendered. The 1st Division repelled a strong joint counterattack by units of the Livorno Division and the Herman

Goering division and, after a fierce struggle, Gela was captured. By nightfall, Licata and Scoglitti surrendered as well. Otherwise, the American landings went well despite the many difficulties in the coordination of army, navy and air forces, and excepting the airborne disasters, the Allies were very pleased with the initial assaults. By the end of D-Day, however, there had been no contact between the British and the Germans.

During the first two days more than 80,000 men, 7,000 vehicles, 300 trucks were placed on shore. At Licata, the Americans had found only token resistance. But Sicily was almost totally different from what was expected. It appeared that the Sicilian campaign would be a pushover and Montgomery and Patton were fully confident that a victorious battle would soon be over. But as often is the case in war, they had little idea of what lay ahead since they had not yet recognized what Max Hastings called the "fanatical tenacity" of the German soldier and the defensive mastery of the German commanders which would make a nightmare of the Allied campaigns on Italian soil. Such important objectives as Ponte Olivo and Niscemi in the western sector had not been reached, and the help of an airborne regiment was needed in the Gela area. However, General Matthew Ridgway was concerned that Allied ships might again fire on his paratroopers, so he requested a safe air corridor over the fleet. Finally, the navy agreed to Ridgway's request and both ships and beach anti-aircraft units were notified that the drop would occur at midnight on July 11.

Unfortunately, on that day Allied anti-aircraft gunners had been kept busy with more than 500 sorties by Italian and German aircraft mostly in the Seventh Army area. Not knowing such conditions lay ahead, 2,000 men in 144 aircraft took off from Tunisia and, just before they approached the landing areas, German planes heavily attacked the Gela area and Allied ships attempted to scatter for safety. Then just as calm was restored, the second Allied airborne flight passed over the coastline and a single American machine gun opened fire. Soon all the guns on shore and on the ships were firing at the helpless paratrooper transports overhead. The pilots made desperate efforts to scatter to avoid the deadly fire amid sheer confusion. Eight planes turned safely back but most immediately dropped their troopers, and again, many fell into the sea. Of the 144 planes, 23 never returned to base, 6 were shot down, 37 received serious damage and 82 troopers were killed with 131 wounded and 6 missing. Also, the

regiment was scattered over a large area which greatly reduced its effectiveness. It was an inexcusable tragedy which would be partially redeemed by the lessons that were successfully applied to the invasion of Normandy.

In the meantime, the Allies had successfully resisted the limited counterattacks of the Italians and the Germans. Then, Hitler ordered the transfer of the 1st Parachute Division to Sicily from France and the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division was moved across the Messina Strait. However, noting that the coastal defenses had failed and that Allied troops and equipment were landing faster than Axis forces could reach the area, Guzzoni, local German General von Senger und Etterlin and Kesselring saw that there was little chance of successfully holding off the Allied conquest of Sicily. They knew they were incapable of launching any more counterattacks successfully against the beachheads which had become connected into a continuous front. In fact, von Senger felt that it would be useless to bring two more divisions to the island when it appeared likely that evacuation could not be long delayed. On any account, only defensive measures could be taken until additional reinforcements could arrive. They agreed first priority was to head-off the British drive for Messina by blocking them at Catania where reinforcements were being directed.

As the Allied ground forces prepared to attack inland Alexander planned for Montgomery to make the main offensive by quickly taking Catania and Messina. Revealing his estimate of the relative ability of American and British leadership and fighting qualities, he had given Patton the secondary role of protecting Monty's left flank. Clearly he wanted his British forces to have the honor of being the first to reach Messina. Although Patton did not like it, he was anxious to cut loose on his own and did not complain. Clearly, he saw the great opportunity that lay before him for turning his tanks loose in a great end-run around both the enemy and Montgomery, whom by then he and most American officers intensely disliked .

When the British attempted to get past Syracuse in the direction of Catania they were struck by a fairly strong counterstroke by Italian and German troops. Afterwards the enemy withdrew towards Lentini uncovering Augusta which the British seized on July 12. But when Montgomery found his approach to Lentini was strongly defended, he decided to move to the left and use Highway 124 which swung across the American front, to get around Mount Etna and behind the enemy blocking his path to Catania. The problem was that Highway 124 had

been reserved by Alexander for use by the American Seventh Army which Montgomery arrogantly ignored. He ordered his XXX Corps to attack up the highway which placed his troops directly across the path of the line of advance of Patton's Seventh Army. Typically, the indecisive Alexander concurred with Montgomery's move. It was apparent to Patton that he had been placed in a minor role and that Monty had been given "the prize of Sicily" with possession of two of the main roads to Messina. But Omar Bradley was furious that his 45th Division had been forced to sidestep completely around the 1st Division and advance west instead of northward toward Messina. Even worse for the Allies, it had taken the 45th's pressure off the Herman Goering Division which then could throw its full force against the British before the Catania plain. It also allowed the 15th Panzer Grenadiers to get away from the US 3rd Division and to link up with the Goering Division. If Bradley had been able to continue his drive, he likely would have stopped two of Germany's strongest divisions from forming a strong defensive line around Mount Etna which prevented Montgomery from reaching Messina in time to cut off the escape of the Germans from Sicily.

For his advance on Catania, Montgomery wanted a parachute brigade and a commando unit to seize the Lentini and Primasole bridges. The night of July 13 the commandos took the Lentini bridge but were driven off by the Germans. Incredibly, the previous airborne tragedy was repeated. Again the Allied aerial convoys were subjected to friendly anti-aircraft fire which alerted the enemy of the attack. More than half the planes were struck by fire from Allied ships. Of the original 108 aircraft involved, 87 managed to force their way through the fire, but only 39 dropped their troopers anywhere near their targets. Finally, after repeated assaults by the Eighth Army, the Primasole Bridge was taken but little progress was made towards Catania. The fact was that Monty's Eighth Army had failed to break through its front—after three days of heavy assault his 50th Division had moved ahead only 1,000 yards beyond the Primsole bridge, so Montgomery was forced to cancel his breakout plans at Catania. In fact, the struggle before Catania had become one of the most difficult battles of the campaign for the British. Initially, only a small and determined enemy parachute unit had denied the Eighth Army its opportunity to entrap most of the Axis forces and to pass east of Mount Etna with an open road to Messina. If Monty had not canceled his plan for an amphibious landing at Catania, he would have found

that it was not defended from the sea and he would have likely succeeded in accomplishing the main objective of Operation HUSKY.

Finally, as the British front began to move ahead, the Germans withdrew behind the Simeto River. Then, when Montgomery failed to break the Catania defensive line, he concluded that he could get to Messina quicker by moving his main assault to the left of Mount Etna. Meanwhile, George Patton saw that Palermo, the largest city in Sicily, laid literally open to his left and that it would give him possession of much of western Sicily, as well, while the main Italian and German forces were holding up Montgomery. Since Alexander had previously authorized him to make reconnaissance in force towards Agrigento and Porto Empedocle, which lay between him and Palermo, Patton quickly made his own plans for the "reduction of Sicily." Just as the Seventh Army began to get underway towards their new objectives, Alexander issued new orders making it clear that Patton's major task was to block any German attack on the British from the left, while Monty's Eighth Army would have the honor of driving northeast to capture Messina to cut-off the enemy retreat to the mainland. Although the order made no mention of Palermo, it authorized the capture of Agrigento and Porto Empedocle which Seventh Army forces had already taken.

But the suggestion that the Americans were to protect Montgomery's rear was another insult to George Patton, as well as most of the other American commanders, which he refused to accept. As General Bradley would say, "there was little to be gained and there was no glory" in the capture of the western part of Sicily. Therefore, the US forces had, in effect, been shunted off to the west where there was little action. But the Americans believed that coalition warfare meant equal sharing of responsibilities and opportunities in the conduct of military warfare. So Patton went to see Alexander and got his approval for Palermo to be the major objective of the Seventh Army. Then the 1st Division was directed to advance to the north coast, the 45th toward Palermo from the southeast, while the 82nd Airborne and the 3rd Division struck out for Palermo from the south and southwest, with the 2nd Armored Division to provide the final push, if needed, to take the city. So away the Americans quickly took off in what became little more than a road march and they swarmed all over central and eastern Sicily "more like liberators than conquerors."

By this time Montgomery, having serious trouble pushing his way towards Catania with his XIII Corps, stopped at the Simento river, directed Leese's XXX Corps to push "with all speed" towards the interior on the left. But Leese left Enna uncovered and Bradley's 1st Division quickly took it and continued to shield the British left while the US 45th Division raced towards the north coast. As the Americans rushed across Sicily, light Italians forces were quickly brushed aside by the totally mobile Yanks, and by July 22, the 45th reached the coast near Termini Imerese, and when the 2nd and the 3rd Armored prepared to attack Palermo, the people of the city welcomed the Americans like liberators. The next day the ports of Trapani, Marsala and Castellammare were occupied. Although of limited military significance, Patton's quick capture of central and western Sicily was a "spectacular achievement" with strong political ramifications for Germany, as well as for Italy. Furthermore, there had been only 272 battle casualties, 53,000 prisoners were taken, a major port became available and, most importantly, George Patton had dramatically demonstrated the "power and mobility" of American armor.

It soon became obvious that it was only a matter of days before the Axis resistance in Sicily would collapse and that the German and Italian troops would retreat to the mainland. Furthermore, it was apparent to both German and Italian leaders that the Allies would soon attack the mainland and that the strained relationship between Italy and Germany would likely collapse. For some time, most Italians had become sick of the war and wanted to end the struggle. Obviously, Hitler knew that Mussolini's control had greatly weakened and that if the "Duce" fell, Germany would be forced to takeover Italy to defend the Reich from Allied attacks from the south. It was also apparent that the Axis troops had to be withdrawn from Sicily and that the best defensive positions should be set up in Northern Italy.

Accordingly, maximum efforts were made by German and Italian defensive actions against Montgomery to gain time to withdraw to the mainland where a more effective resistance could be maintained. Largely due to Alexander's mistaken decision to direct the battle as events occurred, the unexpectedly quick advance had caught the Allies without contingency plans for actions to be taken after the capture of Sicily. Instead, they had decided to base plans on the outcome of the invasion; whether Italy would continue to oppose the Allies; what steps

Germany would take if Italy collapsed; the status of morale among German and Italian troops; the demands of the cross-channel attack scheduled for May 1944; the status of Allied resources in the area; and lastly, whether to attack Sardinia or the Italian mainland?

Finally, the Combined Chiefs decided the substantial assets already located in Sicily could be better applied to an attack on the mainland and that, in order to avoid the difficult terrain in the southern "toe" of Italy, a landing in the Naples area would give the Allies access to a great harbor and place them in a good position to capture Rome. Furthermore, if the Sicilian campaign could be ended soon enough, the invasion could be launched before bad winter weather in difficult terrain. In spite of Patton's rapid progress that had encouraged much optimism, Montgomery continued to be held up by a determined enemy defense which blocked his access to Messina making it doubtful that the campaign in Sicily would end soon.

The Germans had seen that the Italian resistance in Sicily was collapsing and they took over major defensive operations. They were instructed, however, not to launch any major counterattacks but to fight for time, not only for an orderly withdrawal, but in order for heavier forces to be concentrated on the mainland to build stronger defensive lines against the enemy. Also, time was vitally required for the transfer of their forces with equipment from Sicily to the mainland in spite of the ability of Allied air and naval forces to dominate the Strait of Messina. Then, as soon as the Allies observed that fewer German reinforcements were being sent to Sicily, the Joint Chiefs of Staff directed Eisenhower to commence plans to attack the Italian peninsula beginning with an invasion at Naples.

Meanwhile, Montgomery's Eighth Army composed of four British divisions and the 1st Canadian Division, while strongly supported by Allied air and naval forces, had become locked in stalemate. The Herman Goering Division, the 15th and 29th Panzer Grenadiers, and the 1st Parachute Division, backed up by remnants of four Italian divisions firmly entrenched in strong defensive positions, had successfully denied Monty his expected quick dash up the short coastal route to Messina. As an alternative, Monty sent the 78th Division to the left toward Adrano while the 1st Canadians advanced on Highway 121 through Regalbuto. Then, while XIII Corps feinted another attack towards Catania, British ships would land a force beyond Catania to open up the route to Messina.

Accordingly, with Eighth Army continuing to be bogged down while the Seventh Army had reached the north coast, Alexander authorized Patton to undertake reconnaissance on Highway 113 along the north coast toward Messina and along Highway 120, which ran around and behind Mount Etna toward Messina. Alexander apparently believed such probes would draw some of the enemy away from Montgomery and, after the capture of Palermo, Seventh Army was authorized to continue eastwards in a "sustained relentless drive until the enemy is decisively defeated." That was just what George had been waiting for. At last he was free to rush to the east with everything he had and he was determined to make "damn sure" that his Seventh Army would beat Montgomery to Messina!

Suddenly, far-reaching changes in Italy began to take place more quickly than had been expected. The fate of Italy had been one disaster after another since the British began to challenge Mussolini's brutal conquests in Africa in 1940. The Italian Army in Africa had been almost completely destroyed, and the rapid Allied conquest of Sicily convinced most of the Italian people that they wanted no more war. It followed that Mussolini had to go and most of his power became virtually ignored. On July 24, the Fascist Grand Council voted for King Victor Emmanuel to resume command of the military. In an effort to save himself, the "Duce" went to see the King who suggested that he should resign. The next day Mussolini was arrested and when he was succeeded by Marshal Pietro Badoglio, there were delirious celebrations throughout Rome.

In an effort to prevent a takeover of Italy, while Badoglio publicly attempted to avoid open conflict with the Germans, he privately sought to end the war for Italy. Hitler was furious at Mussolini's overthrow. He accused the Italians of treachery and deceit, and wanted to withdraw German units from Sicily into Italy to seize the King, Badoglio and other officials, and to set his friend Mussolini free. Kesselring, as commander of all German forces in Italy, was ordered to evacuate Sicily. But to gain time, "Smiling Albert" was assured by Badoglio there would be no major policy changes, and that the Italians would continue to fight with the Germans against Allied aggression. Hitler also was advised that the Italians would not object to more German troops and two additional divisions were moved from France to southern Italy. The Fuehrer further ordered that if the Italians deserted Germany, the XIV Panzer Corps would be transferred from Sicily and that, in the meantime, German units in Sicily were to

take only defensive actions while preparing to leave for their major defensive stand on the mainland.

Secretly, however, emissaries from Badoglio were in contact with the Allies regarding an armistice. By this time Italian resistance had literally ceased with most units seeking opportunities to surrender to the Allies. The Germans, however, knowing they had to hold the Mount Etna line if they were to successfully escape from Sicily, fought furiously to gain time for the evacuation. The Allies had agreed the time had come to cross over into Italy with a landing on the beaches at Salerno, near Naples, to strengthen the new government and to convince the Italian public that the Germans were being defeated. The new invasion, however, had to wait for the landing craft used in the Sicily operation to be repaired and refitted. Also, Eisenhower decided that an additional landing across from Messina would hopefully provide distraction and confusion from the attack at Salerno. Finally, it was agreed that the major and principally American force would assault the beaches at Salerno while Montgomery's Eighth Army would attack across the Strait of Messina at Calabria.

But Montgomery still had not been able to make much progress against Kesselring's skillfully manned natural defenses that were almost impassable. Furthermore, while Allied troops struggled to fight around such obstacles with large casualties, the enemy quickly retreated to erect and defend new obstructions equally difficult. Meanwhile, the terrain that kept the American 1st and 45th Divisions separated on the left had made mutual support difficult, until they began to move east on highways 113 and 120 with good progress in spite of minefields and blown bridges. At the same time, while the Goering Division continued to hold up Montgomery in the Catania area, the other German divisions were being gradually pushed back by the Americans and Canadians in north and central Sicily. Slowly giving way to superior force, the Germans withdrew from Nicosia and Agira, and on July 27 Cerami was taken with little resistance although it had required five regiments to take Troina. By then it was clear to Allied leaders that the determined enemy would make every effort to hold on to the Messina bridgehead as long as possible.

On the American right the Canadians successfully drove through Catenanuova and, when joined by Monty's 78th Division, Centuripe was taken eliminating the two major obstacles before Adrano and threatened a major

German escape route out of the Catania plain. Heavy Allied air attacks struck Troina on August 4, but only modest gains were made on the ground. Unfortunately, two American planes dropped their bombs on Canadian troops at Regalbuto and all subsequent flights by American planes over the British front were forbidden. Then, as Montgomery directed XXX Corps toward Adrano, the Germans began their withdrawal process from his front. Even though the Goering Division still managed to hold the British advance to a slow and costly pace before both Catania and at Adrano, after a month-long costly battle, on August 5 the Eighth Army finally forced the enemy out of Adrano and Catania and the Etna Line was broken. The attrition on German forces, the absence of reserves, the relentless pressure of vastly superior Allied forces and resources, the constant Allied aerial and naval attacks, and the persistent threat of amphibious landings behind their lines, forced the enemy to begin its final withdrawal to Messina in preparation for its escape from Sicily.

Soon the enemy withdrawals permitted Catania to be occupied by the British and Troina was occupied by the Americans. Nonetheless, on the northern coastal road easily defended natural barriers threatened to stop the rapid drive of George Patton's armor. Nothing, however, could deny the newly-found "hero" of America's military might his long-awaited moment of glory. He was determined to get to Messina before Montgomery and he would permit nothing to stop him. Indeed, while the famous Eighth Army had been held up for weeks within short distances from their landing area, and had been unable to breakout against the limited German-Italian forces against them, Patton had conquered three-fourths of Sicily, although admittedly, against mostly a weak and disorganized Italian resistance. Now "Old Blood n'My Guts" was ready for his master-stroke, an amphibious end-run to get behind the strong German defenses which blocked his rush eastward on the coastal highway. Supported by naval and air attacks, and coordinated with Bradley's aggressive ground movements to the east on Highway 120, the Germans were quickly forced to withdraw from the San Fratello positions on August 7, and Patton's end-run succeeded with little opposition.

By this time, the Germans knew there was little hope for a continued alliance with the Italians, but they refrained from taking any unnecessary aggressive steps for fear the Italians would join the Allies against them and cut off their troops in Sicily. They also feared that the Allies might invade the mainland before their

units on Sicily could withdraw and be available to join the defense. Hitler, convinced the Italians would turn against Germany at their first opportunity, preparing to take the Italian fleet, seize Rome and to use Italy as an outer defense to deny the Allies access to Germany itself, brought more German units into Italy. At the same time on August 10, Italian units were warned by their new government to be prepared to resist any aggression against them by the Germans.

By August 11, strong advances by both the British and American forces in Sicily had convinced Kesselring to order the evacuation to be completed within four nights. Facing the likelihood of strong naval and air opposition from the Allies, some 500 guns were sited to resist such attacks forming one of the most effective protective defenses of the war. Three naval flotillas consisting of barges and other flat-bottomed boats using six ferry routes would be used to carry across the 15th and 29th Panzer Grenadiers, XIV Panzer Corps, and the Herman Goering and 1st Parachute Divisions. Approximately 8,000 men could be ferried each night and the final defensive Tortorici perimeter would be held until August 12, when the last withdrawals would be ferried across in three stages. Furthermore, the Italians also successfully organized four ferry routes for their men and equipment. In spite of knowing about the withdrawals, it was yet another shocking HUSKY blunder that the Anglo-Americans would fail to develop any effective organized effort to overcome the retreat of the enemy across the strait!

Both Montgomery and Patton, of course, realized the full importance of getting to Messina before the enemy could escape. While Montgomery was still moving slowly around Mount Etna with the British press reporting that he was doing most of the Allied fighting, the Americans were determined to beat Monty to Messina. Patton drove his forces forward relentlessly including another amphibious end-run with air and naval support at Brolo. While that landing was unopposed, the costly defense of the withdrawing Germans revealed that if there had been more landing craft available for a stronger American landing, Patton could have cut-off much of the 29th Panzers and the XIV Panzer Corps as well. But during the night of August 11 the Tortorici Line held and the evacuation got under way on schedule.

Although Patton drove forward with the full force of his 1st, 3rd and 9th Divisions from the west and Montgomery pushed up from the south, the Germans continued their withdrawal operations with such success that they

extended their ferrying schedule for an additional night. In fact, their escape went so well that all of their units escaped. With little effective interruption from Allied ships and aerial bombing, the evacuation took place even during daylight hours, and by August 17 the operation was almost entirely completed. Finally on the night of August 16, advance patrols of the US 3rd Division entered Messina without resistance. The next morning Patton himself "roared" into the city and proudly received its surrender. Montgomery's advance commandos failed to get beyond the retreating Germans in an amphibious landing at Cape d'Ali and managed to reach Messina just as the surrender ended. After having advanced almost completely around the island of Sicily, George Patton had beaten Montgomery to Messina!

But the inexcusable success of the German evacuation had been staggering. Almost 40,000 of their troops were successfully ferried across the strait with 9,600 vehicles, 94 guns, 47 tanks, 1,000 tons of ammunition, 970 tons of fuel, and 15,700 tons of equipment. Surprisingly, even the Italians had saved more than 70,000 men, 500 vehicles and 75-100 guns. True enough, the Allies had won an important victory and the enemy had been forced to retreat. The size and power of coalition warfare, if not always managed efficiently, had been overwhelmingly impressive. It was unquestionably an immensely important and greatly-needed victory for the Allies which clearly meant an eventual defeat for the Axis forces. But the incredible attainment of the enemy in successfully saving almost 125,000 men, along with great quantities of weapons and supplies, in the face of their opponents possessing practically unlimited resources, indicated that a long and bloody conflict still lay ahead.

In one of the principal incidents of the campaign's incompetence, and in spite of Alexander's request for the coordination of ground, naval and air actions against the evacuation, Admiral Cunningham had refused to use his warships against the withdrawals until Allied air had destroyed the strong enemy coastal guns guarding the strait. Air Marshal Tedder agreed to direct air attacks against the guns, but as a result of heavy anti-aircraft defenses and commitments for attacks for the interdiction of Allied landing areas on the mainland, the aerial assaults were insufficient to meet naval requirements. Consequently, Cunninghan claimed that there was no "effective method" of stopping the evacuation by sea or air and that only successful actions by ground forces could

cut-off the withdrawals. But as it had been in North Africa and as it would be in Italy and Normandy, critical and inexcusable mistakes by the Allies, and principally overcaution by Montgomery, had prevented the entrapment and total destruction of large enemy forces which could have removed the Allied inability to end the Italian campaign and to have greatly changed the impact of the Italian campaign upon the war.

One of the most unfortunate consequences of the Sicilian campaign was that Alexander, who had not been favorably impressed with American fighting and leadership abilities in Tunisia, became strongly biased toward the Americans which he carried over into the struggle on the mainland and which, undoubtedly, contributed greatly to the difficulties of the Mediterranean campaigns. The Americans resented their placement by Alexander into a secondary role in Sicily without tactical justification, just when they were set for a strong strike towards Messina, in order that Montgomery might be first into the city. As much as anything, it became the source of much of the ill will between the Americans and the British.

Operation HUSKY was successful, however, in clearing Sicily of the enemy and it did provide some important benefits to the Allies. Positions were reached from which the Italian mainland could be more easily attacked and which would directly threaten Germany itself. The axis domination of shipping in the Mediterranean was ended, Allied air bases much closer to Germany became available, an important part of the Axis alliance would be terminated, Mussolini had been forced out of office, essential lessons regarding amphibious operations and airborne landings were learned, and British-American command relations had acquired both leadership and operational experience. As Martin Blumenson has pointed out, the growing maturity of the American commanders had gained for them equal status with the British commanders which would prove to be extremely important for future operations on the continent.

It was obvious, however, that HUSKY had been flawed to a degree that exceeded inexperience and new relationships between Allies. The major blunder of the campaign upon which most mistakes were based involved Alexander's lack of decisive leadership and the absence of a strong control over the land, sea and air commanders which resulted in uncoordinated planning and execution. The limited effectiveness of substantial naval and air resources and the airborne disasters were inexcusable. The exaggerated estimates of enemy resistance by Allied

intelligence led to a lack of aggressiveness, too much caution and the ineffective application of abundant resources was particularly evident by Montgomery. The most disastrous consequence resulted from the fact that the Eighth Army remained largely immobile throughout most of the campaign as a result of Montgomery's failure to outflank the major obstacles of the Mount Etna area. By either ground operations or amphibious assaults he failed to cut-off the enemy's withdrawal to the mainland which would have denied the Germans much of the troops and weapons which were so successfully employed in the longest and most difficult land campaign in the West.

The major mistake with HUSKY was that no strategy was ever developed and agreed upon between two Allies who had no experience with military cooperation. To the contrary, an overall strategy was literally made improbable by the continuing insistence of the British for operations in the Mediterranean area and by the American emphasis on the invasion of the continent through France. Furthermore, the British were convinced that a successful HUSKY would force Italy to seek peace and the Americans believed it would involve Allied units in an indecisive struggle which would greatly distract from the success of the cross-channel attack. By the time the campaign got underway, the command was characterized by disagreement and dissension which led to a long and difficult campaign lasting to the end of the war, and failed to accomplish any of its objectives with any substantial influence upon the outcome of World War II.

Oddly enough, there had been virtually no Allied air cover for the Sicily invasion and the navy claimed that what little was done was not effective. Furthermore, the Allied command system was unbelievably botched up. First, requests for air coverage had to be directed to naval headquarters in Malta, then to air force HQ in Tunisia, so that by the time air support arrived it was generally too late. Fortunately, Axis planes were able to make only largely incidental attacks. But 7th Army claimed that air support had been "wholly inadequate," and that many requests for help were not provided. In contrast, between June 15 and August 17, 533 enemy aircraft had been shot down over Sicily, many more were destroyed on the ground, 2,500 tons of bombs were dropped on bases and ports, 7,500 tons on airfields, and 15,500 tons on lines of communication.

Still substantial losses were inflicted upon the Axis forces in Sicily including 20,000 Germans and 125,000 Italians killed, wounded or captured. Allied

casualties totaled 9,968 Americans and 12,843 British. But only about 60,000 Germans, backed up by 200,000 largely ineffective Italian troops, had held up 450,000 well-equipped British and American troops who possessed almost unlimited naval and air support. It has been called "a moral victory" for the Axis troops who were outnumbered three to one, and who fought one of history's most successful defensive battles. Against an overwhelming enemy with little naval or air support, it had successfully withdrawn its forces in one of the most prolonged and efficient retreats of the war.

With the campaign in Sicily coming to an end, on August 16 Dwight Eisenhower directed Montgomery's Eighth Army to launch Operation BAYTOWN onto the toe of Italy as soon as possible to be followed by Operation AVALANCHE at Salerno by the newly organized Fifth Army under US General Mark Clark. In the meantime, Badoglio's secret surrender of his new Italian government was signed on September 3. The same day, Montgomery landed across the strait in Calabria after more than 400 tons of bombing by Allied naval forces, only to find that the enemy had again slipped away into the nearby mountains. Thus the British were able to move for more than a hundred miles finding little resistance other than mines and demolitions and, assisted by a 1st Airborne landing at Taranto on September 9, within two weeks had taken over most of southern Italy up to Bari. Meanwhile on September 8, when the Italian surrender was announced, the Germans immediately occupied Rome, Badoglio's government moved to southern Italy for Allied protection, and the Germans began to prepare to make their major defensive stand in Central Italy. Following the surrender, thousands of Italian soldiers got away from the Germans to fight with either the Allies or the partisans, but 615,000 of them were eventually shipped to Germany where their only choice was to work as a slave laborer or fight for the new German-sponsored Fascist Republic in northern Italy.

Prospects for the success of the new Allied offensives against the Germans in Italy appeared to be promising until Mark Clark's Fifth Army Operation AVALANCHE was landed at Salerno on September 9. With an armada of 700 ships, the US VI Corps and the British X Corps consisting of 55,000 men were placed ashore with a follow-up force numbering 115,000. But the Germans were prepared for the attack since Kesselring had wisely placed six of his eight divisions in central Italy for ready access to potential invasion areas nearby. Since beach

areas favorable for invasion were limited, the Germans were practically waiting in their strongly defended positions by the time the invasion at Salerno occurred.

The British X Corps struck on the left with the US VI Corps attacking on the right amidst considerable confusion and against strong opposition. Again, the size of the assault force was limited by the availability of landing craft and, with the Germans occupying the mountainous heights that surrounded the area, AVALANCHE was subjected to a furious assault by an experienced panzer division. Almost every type of weapon was hurled at the invaders and many landing craft never reached the beach. The Luftwaffe bombed and strafed the beaches in the heaviest enemy aerial attacks of the Mediterranean theater. Chaos, death and destruction prevailed, yet somehow, most of the attacking units got ashore. Immediately, the Germans had withdrawn the 26th Panzers from Montgomery's front to reinforce their Salerno defenses. At the end of the first day, the harbor at Salerno, the airfield at Montecornio, and important road junctions still remained in enemy hands. For several days, it appeared that the Allied attack would fail and would have to be withdrawn.

After the third day, the equivalent of five divisions had gone ashore to find that the 16th Panzers had succeeded in blocking their access towards Naples. Then, suddenly driving through the gap between the two corps, a strong German counterattack almost succeeded in rolling up the Allied beachheads before it was finally driven back by heavy aerial and navy bombing. The outcome of the battle continued to be uncertain as the Americans and the British struggled valiantly to widen the beachhead against strong and well-entrenched enemy attacks. In that the resistance of the enemy could not be penetrated by September 12, the possibility of an evacuation had to be seriously considered by the Allied Command.

The fierce AVALANCHE struggle resulted in three distinct Allied operations: first, the southern flank had to be protected; second, the Montecorvina airfield had to be seized; and third, an offensive had to be launched to breakout of the beachhead. The battle raged undecided for almost two weeks until finally the US 82nd Airborne broke the deadlock. In what has been called the most successful airborne operation of the war, the battle was saved, an embarrassing withdrawal was prevented, and a great disaster was barely avoided. By September 13, it became apparent the German counterattacks would not succeed, that the Germans had been defeated, and that the Allies were in Italy to stay. The courage

and determination of the men of the US Fifth Army, and the decisive support of the navy and air forces, enabled the Allies to desperately hold on at Salerno until reinforcements could arrive.

Finally, realizing that he had failed to push the Allies back into the sea, and that the British Eighth Army moving up from the south would eventually threaten his flank and rear, Kesselring began to withdraw from Salerno to the Italian Appennines mountains. There, he knew that the approaching rainy and muddy winter weather would give him a strong defensive advantage, and that limited reinforcements would be available to the Allies since it was well-known that a cross-channel attack from Britain was soon expected. The Volturno River was chosen for the major defensive line since its rear would be protected by other rivers and mountains. Moreover, the impregnable Monte Cassino, with its domination of so much of central Italy, would strengthen the German positions against the greatly superior forces of the enemy. Having neutralized the Italian armed forces while gaining an almost impenetrable defensive position against the Allies, Kesselring would continue to outsmart his opponents and to successfully hold off vastly superior forces. Accordingly, on September 16 the Germans began their withdrawal from the Salerno area and, by the time Montgomery's Eighth Army belatedly approached, the battle was over.

Unfortunately, although anticipated, the Allies had not been prepared to take advantage of Mussolini's fall. It had required more than six weeks before the Allied attack on the mainland could occur and the delay was largely caused by the Americans who opposed becoming more deeply involved in Mediterranean area operations. Also, Franklin Roosevelt's insistence on "unconditional surrender" at the Casablanca Conference had needlessly complicated negotiations with Bagdoglio's government for an end to the war with Italy. That had given Hitler time to rush additional German units down into Italy. Eight divisions were placed under the command of General Erwin Rommel in the Italian Tyrol and the 2nd Parachute Division from France was sent to Rome to prevent an Italian takeover. Central Italy was to be held by the new Tenth Army under General S. von Vietinghoff consisting of four divisions that had escaped from Sicily. Most of the Italian units had simply been disarmed by Kesselring by promising them they could go home by surrendering their arms. Regrettably, and largely due to Allied bungling, substantial potential Italian military assets, which were available to the

Allied side, were lost which helped to prolong the Italian campaign and substantially increased British-American losses.

Following Mussolini's fall on July 25, the German's had built-up a powerful force of nineteen divisions which could be used against the Allies plus sixteen Italian divisions, if they did not defect. That had enabled them to counterattack the invasion at Salerno which might have succeeded had the Allied aerial and naval forces not finally managed to dominate the beachheads. Later Kesselring reported that when the Salerno assault began there was confusion among his forces which were fighting in a country which had gone over to the other side, and upon learning of an airborne landing at Rome, they feared that the southern half of Italy would have to be evacuated. He said that the Allied assault at Salerno occurred at the one place his limited forces could effectively defend and that he had learned that his opponents never moved beyond the reach of their air cover. Under such conditions, Mark Clark believed that the Allies had been fortunate to avert a "near disaster." The Italians had wanted the landing in northern Italy to cut-off German forces in southern and central Italy that would have denied them the use of the Appennines for defense. In fact, Clark had proposed landing in the Gulf of Gaeta just north of Naples where the terrain would have denied the Germans the mountainous protection of Salerno. But the policy of the Allies not to exceed the limits of its fighter aircraft protection unnecessarily dictated the landing at Salerno resulting in one of the most difficult battles of the war.

Because it had become obvious that most of the resources of men and supplies for Allied operations would be coming from America, the British had finally and reluctantly pledged their support for an invasion of France. In return, the Americans had agreed to go forward with an assault on the Italian mainland even though no understanding had been reached regarding the future conduct of the Italian campaign. The limited availability of landing craft, which had been a major cause of the operational conflict between the Allies, prohibited two simultaneous landings in Italy, so that the proposed assault at Salerno had to wait until the Eighth Army was safely ashore in Calabria. But again, Monty was critical of the planning, arguing that his operation would be wasteful since it was not needed and that it should have been used to reinforce the Salerno landings. As it turned out, Monty was right, but he had been wrong in Sicily, and he was ignored.

For a fact, the operational planning had been generally speculative and unrealistic as was demonstrated by a proposed Allied airborne landing to capture Rome as soon as Italy capitulated. Fortunately, General Matthew Ridgway went secretly to Rome only to discover that his small airborne force would be easily wiped out by two Panzer Grenadier Divisions stationed near the city, and the operation was canceled. The purpose of AVALANCHE at Salerno had been to place Allied forces so as to benefit from the Italian surrender and to gain the major port of Naples. Then Mark Clark's Fifth Army could join Montgomery's 8th Army coming up from Calabria for a drive on to Rome as the Fifteenth Army Group under Alexander. But the supply of landing craft permitted only three divisions of the British X Corps and the American VI for the initial assault. Special Ranger and Commando units were attached to takeover the mountain passes between Salerno and Naples to block a counterattack, and the major objective of the British was to secure the all-important Montecorvina airfield. As a follow-up, the US 36th and the US 45th Divisions were to hold the right flank but, unfortunately, the forces used were far too weak to meet their assigned tasks. Even worse, a critical mistake was made when the two corps were landed separated from each other so that mutual support was impossible. They were ten miles apart and the VI Corps was forced to maintain a fifteen mile wide front. Consequently, the invading force was not strong enough to defend the beachhead, much less move forward in an area where such strong natural defenses were available to the enemy.

Kesselring expected the invasion and his well-protected gun emplacements completely covered the landing areas. The Allied assault plan had been developed and approved without adequate consideration of the typography. Consequently, the invasion was placed in the most difficult coastal area between Rome and the toe of Italy and the forces deployed were incapable of forcing a breakout. Clark also committed an equally fatal error by insisting that a preliminary naval bombardment would destroy the element of surprise. Mistakenly, the Allied commanders expected that the Italian surrender would greatly cripple the enemy's resistance, and they were surprised when the Germans had immediately occupied Rome and taken control of all of northern Italy with little difficulty.

Although the weather had imposed difficult conditions at Salerno, including the restriction of Allied air power, the Americans were particularly critical of

Montgomery's slow advance from southern Italy while Clark's Fifth Army struggled desperately to hold on to the beachheads. The criticism was well founded for the record shows that Montgomery simply ignored his instructions to assist the Fifth Army. The "Hero of Alamein" had been gravely disappointed not to have beaten the Yanks to Messina and he was sulking over the failure of his most recent effort to gain overall command of the Allied forces entering Italy. As an egomaniac who resented being commanded by anyone, either British or American, Monty felt he had been shunted to an unimportant and useless landing in southern Italy which would deny him another triumph of glory. In fact, the original plan had called for only the Eighth Army to invade southern Italy with Montgomery in command. It was changed when the fall of Mussolini and the likelihood of the surrender of Italy indicated that a second landing nearer Rome would better enable the exploitation of developments. Unsurprisingly, the eccentric Montgomery decided he would conduct his own separate campaign, take his time, and build up his forces in the south to the point where he could gain a substantial and successful campaign in the north.

In spite of intelligence that his landing in southern Italy would be practically unopposed, Montgomery had insisted on heavy preliminary bombardments by Eighth Army guns and by the Allied navy. The invasion itself, however, was described as being like a "naval regatta." Once ashore, and learning the Italian government had just surrendered, Montgomery made no effort, and issued no orders, to push ahead to Salerno to assist the Fifth Army. Instead, Eighth Army was solely occupied in building up reinforcements and supplies for a "counterattack" by the Germans he knew had already retreated. With only some "slight German resistance," it required nine hours for his leading Fifth Division to move eighteen miles. Not only had he failed to issue any orders for any urgency for the Eighth Army to advance toward Solerno, as ordered by Alexander, he actually authorized a two day rest for the Fifth Division near Nicastro. Richard Lamb describes his advance as having been "like a holiday picnic after Sicily and Africa." Clark contended that the battle would have quickly turned in favor of the Allies had Montgomery's Eighth Army driven north to Salerno as expected.

The truth was that Monty lied to Alexander on September 9 by claiming "My divisions are now strung out, have fought and marched 100 miles in seven days, are tired and must be rested," when more than 5,000 vehicles had been ferried

over for moving his troops by road transport. In fact, two British correspondents had driven alone by road from Nicastro to Salerno, a distance of about 150 miles in 48 hours, and met no opposition. On September 10 Alexander had notified Montgomery: "Utmost importance that you maintain pressure upon Germans so they cannot remove force off your front and concentrate against AVALANCHE...next few days crucial." Monty ignored the message. During the greatest crisis at Salerno, when the Germans had succeeded in pushing through the gap between the Americans and the British at Salerno, Bernard Montgomery's Eighth Army was resting. To put it simply, he was unwilling to risk any danger to his Eighth Army from the retreating Germans and intentionally refused to assist the Fifth Army which was fighting for its life at Salerno. As a consequence of his refusal to act, the 26th Panzer Division joined five other German divisions at Salerno and almost succeeded in driving Mark Clark's Fifth Army back into the sea with great casualties. It was not a mistake, an error or a blunder. It was clearly an intentional act for which he should have been court-martialed. The career of the divisive and controversial British General, who caused the Allies so many troubles, and without whom the war would certainly have been conducted with far less controversy, more victories, and far fewer casualties, should have been ended by Winston Churchill. As the war progressed, it became increasingly apparent that the Prime Minister's designation of Bernard Montgomery as the commander of the British forces in North Africa upon the recommendation of Alan Brooke, was the greatest Allied personnel blunder of World War II.

As another distressing sign of what was to follow, AVALANCHE had been a flawed operation from its beginning. The leadership of Alexander and Clark was seen to be indecisive and they failed to use effectively the assets available to them. The operation not only represented the wrong application of resources, it was not the right place for an invasion, and Clark greatly erred by eliminating the preliminary bombing of the beachheads. Unquestionably, the greatest mistake involved the ten-mile gap between the British and American corps which could have been filled by the 82nd Airborne Division and would have changed the complex of the battle. Clark, with good reason, blamed the battle's difficulties on Montgomery's intentional dawdling which prevented the relief of the desperately struggling Fifth Army. On the other hand, Clark's limited experience with high

command was a liability even though Alexander considered him to be a good army commander. It is also understandable that Clark believed Montgomery had gained more press and glory than he deserved and, as a result, Clark became overly obsessed with the desire to beat Monty to Rome which inappropriately led to the adoption of a political consideration over military necessity.

As the German Tenth Army had begun to withdraw to the north, Clark kept up the pressure from Salerno, and within a week Naples was occupied by the Allies on October 1. Three weeks of intense struggle had been required to get to Naples at a cost of 7,000 British and 5,000 American casualties. While Salerno had given the senior British commanders more reason to question America's military leadership and performance, the Allies continued to believe that Rome, the symbol of victory in Italy, would soon fall. Salerno also caused Adolf Hitler to abandon his plan for German forces to fall back into northern Italy in the belief that he could hold the Allies in central Italy. Consequently, Kesselring made the most of his next defense by taking advantage of the Volturno, Sangro, Rapido, Garigliano and Liri rivers backed up by mountain barriers in an area overlooked by the famous Monte Cassino monastery. Defensive stands would be made at each barrier between Naples and his major Gustav Line, which would be held as long as possible. The German commander had chosen one of the strongest citadels of defense in all of Europe and the rain, mud and snow of the oncoming winter would make his positions practically invincible.

Despite the threatening difficulties of the campaign, the Allies had accomplished a major objective of the Mediterranean operations by having forced the commitment of several veteran German divisions to battle which would prevent their presence in France. However, as Winston Churchill began to press for the early capture of Rome, Kesselring's decision to make his next stand at the Volturno River some thirty-five miles north of Naples, meant the beginning of some of the toughest and most costly fighting engaged in by the Allies anywhere in Europe. There Fifth Army found it was faced by 35,000 veterans of the XIV Panzer Corps who were fighting for time while fortifications of the infamous Gustav (Winter) Line along the Liri Valley were being completed. Soon deteriorating weather flooded the Volturno and the Germans easily turned back Allied attempts to cross the river. Finally, the river was crossed with amphibious operations but more rivers and more defensive barriers lay ahead with bad weather preventing all air support. When the coalition forces gradually fought their way to

the Winter Line, anchored by the Garigliano River, they faced an even greater obstacle and continuous assaults failed to get them across. By December, the Fifth Army had incurred 22,000 casualties and it was forced to recognize that Cassino and the Liri Valley could not be reached.

Once Montgomery got moving again he forced his way across the Biferno River in early October and, while holding his largely unopposed gains on the east coast, his XIII Corps was shifted to central Italy where German defenses were being strengthened. During yet another long pause to "build-up" their forces, the German's had time to substantially increase their defense with the addition of the 76th Panzer Grenadiers and the 65th Infantry. In the interim, Monty added the 2nd New Zealanders giving him a sizable force of five divisions and two armored brigades which he believed would enable him to drive through the Winter Line and get on the highway to be the first to reach the Holy City. But even with a 5 to 1 advantage, he spent too much time forming "a firm base" which allowed the 90th and the 26th Panzers to come up and stop him half way to Pescara. Then at the end of 1943, when Montgomery turned over the Eighth Army to Oliver Leese, after being named to command the initial assault for the Normandy invasion, he ended his participation in the Italian campaign in yet another stalemate.

On December 2 Clark's Fifth Army launched a renewed offensive west of the Appennines. Although his force had been increased to ten divisions, the British 7th Armored and the US 82nd Airborne were being transferred to Britain for the cross-channel attack. His first objective was to get through the mountain defenses to the west and to reach Highway 6 and the Mignano gap. Following a furious struggle, the Garigliano River was reached and on December 7, he attacked the Rapido front, but continuing heavy casualties prevented him from reaching the Gustav Line. Moreover, during the two-month winter struggle, 50,000 Americans alone were stricken with illnesses inflicted by awesome winter conditions. The cost of progress had been appalling and it is clear that Montgomery's repeated practice of taking his time and using resources after every advance to "consolidate" from a "firm base" before pressing on, as well as his insistence upon building up "adequate" supplies and material before moving forward, had a disastrous effect upon the outcome of the campaign. As B.H. Liddell Hart put it, "they were 'too late' from fear of having 'too little.'" Most demoralizing, for four months the Allies

had advanced only seventy miles from Salerno against a vastly inferior opposition, and they were still eighty miles from Rome.

Admittedly, the Americans and British had struggled mightily under the worst possible conditions with heavy losses against a fanatical enemy strongly fortified behind practically impenetrable natural obstacles. Even though the enemy was not strong in numbers, was short of both weapons and supplies, and was largely without air support, little progress could be made against their superior defensive tactics. In fact, the battle had become as vicious and as ineffective as the disastrous trench warfare that had literally ground up millions of men in World War I, and which the Allies had hoped to avoid in Italy. As a result, the enemy had taken over control of the conflict and the Allies were being subjected to the attrition of heavy losses of men and resources while making little progress towards a victory over the Germans. For Allied commanders and troops, it was the most frustrating and demoralizing struggle of the European War. Furthermore, political leaders and the general public in both the United States and in Britain were upset over a lengthy unexpected stalemate in which the strong and vastly superior American-British forces had been unable to overcome the continuous withdrawal of a weakened and defeated enemy.

As 1944 began, it was apparent there would be no early capture of Rome and that, after continuous fighting for months against a relentless foe under the worst possible conditions, both the American and British forces were exhausted. To make matters worse, the Yanks believed the Brits were dragging their feet and had been too cautious, and the Brits believed the Yanks had not fought well and were poorly led. Hitler, however, was pleased over Kesselring's success in stopping the advance of the enemy, and sent the remainder of Rommel's divisions from the north to hold the Allies south of Rome as long as possible. The stalemate indicated that the Italian campaign would be long and costly, that Italy would not soon be liberated, and there would be no access to Germany itself in the near future. Disappointingly, it appeared that its only advantage would be to keep German units away from the Normandy and Soviet fronts.

Unfortunately for the Allied commanders, for the many soldiers who were killed and wounded, and for the outcome of the war, politics exerted a greater influence in Italy than in any other Allied campaign. Winston Churchill and Alan Brooke, having fought the Americans so vigorously for so long over the

invasion of France, consistently meddled in the conduct of the fighting in Italy to the extent that they were greatly responsible for much of the difficulties of the Allied operations. The Prime Minister had convinced Roosevelt to involve America in the Mediterranean area over the objections of General George Marshall and the US Chiefs of Staff which, like most Americans, believed the offensive gave priority to British political interests. The difficulties began when Churchill led Roosevelt to believe they could "slit this soft underbelly of the Mediterranean," suggesting that Germany would then lie exposed and undefended before the joint power of Britain and America, and that it could also cut off the Soviet domination of East Europe. Indeed, Churchill and Brooke had imposed upon the Americans the British military structure of command which permitted the flawed leadership of Harold Alexander and Bernard Montgomery to have such a disastrous effect upon the conduct of Allied operations in the Mediterranean campaigns.

Meanwhile, the planning for OVERLORD had progressed rapidly and as the deadline neared for an invasion in the spring of 1944, the need for an overall commander was apparent. George Marshall and Alan Brooke each wanted command of what would be the most important operation of the war for the Allies. Fortunately, Churchill would not part with Brooke and Roosevelt could not do without Marshall, so Dwight Eisenhower got the job. Both British and American leaders later agreed no one could have handled the controversial relations between the Allies better than Ike. General "Jumbo" Wilson succeeded Eisenhower as the Supreme Commander in the Mediterranean area as the British took over the top command of the Italian campaign. Churchill and Eisenhower both wanted Alexander to command the invasion of France, but Brooke succeeded in convincing Churchill that Montgomery was the better man. As it turned out, it was one of the worst decisions of the war since it is unlikely that anyone could have caused more harm for coalition warfare than Bernard Montgomery. Surely Alexander, or any other major British leader, would have been a better choice, would not have been so consistently overly cautious, would have been more aggressive in battle, would have had fewer stalemates and defeats, would not have caused such dissension among the Allies regarding the conduct of the conflict, and surely an Allied victory would have been attained more quickly and at less cost.

With the Allied front stalled before Cassino and the Rapido, it was apparent that an amphibious landing was needed to get around the frustrating defense of the Germans. The best choice appeared to be at Anzio which would place the assault forces behind the Gustav Line and would permit occupation of the nearby Alban Hills as the only major barrier to Rome. But there were serious questions to be considered. First, the availability of landing craft limited the initial invasion force to only two divisions and, secondly, it was totally unrealistic to expect the Fifth Army, after being held up so long at the Garigliano and the Rapido rivers, to be able to suddenly force its way through the Gustav Line and drive fifty or more miles toward Anzio within ten days. Alexander, however, believed that the possession of the Alban Hills would cut-off German rail and road access to Cassino and would cause an enemy withdrawal to the Apennines. Mark Clark, however, was not convinced that the limited Anzio assault would be strong enough to succeed and he opposed the plan. Then suddenly Winston Churchill, alarmed at public concern over slow progress in the Italian campaign, branded the stagnation to be "scandalous" and blamed the failure to mount amphibious attacks on both coasts of Italy to have been "disastrous." The Prime Minister firmly believed that the new Operation SHINGLE would be the only way of breaking the stalemate in Italy and the Americans, believing they had finally won unqualified British support for OVERLORD, went along with Churchill.

Since Rome had become the principal focus of the war for the Allies, the Prime Minister literally took over and pushed SHINGLE as the best way to get to Rome in the shortest time. With the expectation of capturing the Holy City, he insisted that there be both British and American units and plans were made for Clark's Fifth Army VI Corps, comprised of the British 1st Division and the US 3rd Division, to land in the Anzio-Nettuno area. In another questionable move, the American General John Lucas was given command of VI Corps without having had the experience needed for the job. Furthermore, it was never decided just what specifically Lucas was expected to accomplish, nor how long he could hold the beach to be relieved by the Fifth Army coming up from the south. The record indicates that Clark felt he was forced into an operation of inadequate strength and insufficient support with a doubtful chance of success. Brigadier Kenneth Strong, G-2 for Allied air forces, warned that the Fifth Army would be unable to

breakout at Cassino and to reach Anzio before the Germans could stage a strong counterattack. But the Prime Minister was determined to have his operation, and when it failed, he was said to be among the first to disown it.

Realizing that his forces would be vulnerable to a strong German attack, Lucas did not like the plans for SHINGLE and saw no reason to believe that the Gustav Line would suddenly crack and let Clark rush forward to his aid at Anzio. But his complaints to Clark were ignored and few, if any, contingency arrangements were made regarding the probability that four or more German divisions could be expected to counterattack the assault. To make matters worse, not only had the operation rehearsal gone poorly but Fifth Army was ordered to seize and secure the beachhead, then to advance and secure Colli Laziali for an advance on Rome. More disturbing was the fact that the commanders never really understood the operation. Originally, Lucas was directed to seize and hold the Alban Hills, but when it was realized that objective was twenty miles from the beach, it was eliminated from his final order and he was literally left to his own discretion. As it stood, Alexander appeared to have intended the capture of the Alban Hills but Clark told Lucas to handle the battle as he thought best.

Accordingly, the plans for SHINGLE were finally set. Alexander ordered Clark to launch a simultaneous offensive which, hopefully, would keep the Germans occupied during the Anzio landing and would permit Clark to join up with VI Corps for the march on Rome. Meanwhile, Clark convinced himself that his Fifth Army attack would show-up the British by being the first to cross the Rapido River. But in his decision to make it solely an American operation, he ignored the Garigliano River where the British troops would have had a greater opportunity for progress. The plan also included diversions by the X Corps on his left, then while the British 45th Division protected his left flank, he would charge across the Rapido and rush up Highway 6 towards Cassino. Unadvisedly, the attack was to be led by the US 36th Division which was so exhausted and had lost so many men that its commander had little faith in its chances for success. Also, the enemy front was particularly strong and Clark's staff were inexperienced. With two rivers to cross at night under enemy fire in terrible weather conditions, a successful assault was highly unlikely. Although the attack obtained an initial surprise, Kesselring committed two panzer divisions held in reserve near Rome. If Clark had combined his British and American units

for a single powerful thrust, it likely would have been successful. Instead, his piecemeal attacks were never strong enough to breakthrough the enemy's defenses. Consequently, it was a crippling defeat which did not improve the reputation of either Clark or the American soldier among their British allies.

In spite of highly questionable planning, the Anzio assault of the British 1st Infantry Division and the US 3rd Infantry Division on January 22 took the Germans by surprise, and with practically no opposition the landing became one of the most successful amphibious operations of the war. With 36,000 troops and 3,000 vehicles placed ashore on the first day, total Allied casualties were only thirteen killed, ninety-seven wounded and forty-four missing or captured. Unfortunately, however, a wounded soldier with a copy of the Allied invasion plan was captured. Within the first forty-eight hours a bridgehead seven miles deep was gained reaching from the Mussolini Canal to the Moletta River. Still the enemy was soon strongly entrenched with guns covering all the beaches from the nearby Alban Hills, and aided by the bombing of troops and ships by the Luftwaffe, Anzio quickly became a desperate and bloody battlefield.

Hitler's reaction had been immediate and units from Germany, Yugoslavia and France were dispatched to Italy while three divisions in northern Italy were sent south. In addition to eight divisions held as a reserve to protect the north of Italy, Kesselring had fifteen divisions in his Tenth Army to move against the Anzio invasion and to hold the Gustav Line against eighteen Allied divisions. Also, the German's had quickly and effectively responded to the Anzio attack and, while continuing their hold along the Gustav Line, the Herman Goering Division was shifted to join the two reserve divisions from the Rome area which were committed against the invaders. Within little more than a week, Kesselring had eight divisions in the Anzio area, seven divisions facing Clark along the Gangliano and the Rapido, three divisions covering the Eighth Army towards the Adriatic coast, and six divisions being held in the north of Italy. Most unfortunately, once Lucas got ashore, instead of immediately pushing forward before the enemy could set-up a defense, he chose to "consolidate" the beachhead and waited one week before any effort was made to advance. Not only no offensive action was undertaken, but in the interim the entire beachhead was covered by enemy artillery fire, and the invasion fleet was repeatedly bombarded by the Luftwaffe.

To the south, after a week of heavy fighting with substantial losses, Clark's exhausted troops ceased their attacks on Cassino and withdrew on February 11. Much like the French and the Germans at Verdun during World War I, the Americans and the British continued to wear themselves out desperately battering against the German defenses at Cassino. Then the 2nd New Zealand and the 4th Indian Divisions were thrown against the enemy in brutal frontal assaults which resulted in more exhaustion and heavy losses. On February 15, the heavy aerial bombing which destroyed the famous Cassino monastery and outraged public opinion throughout much of the world, created great controversy and was considered to have been a major blunder by the Allies. It not only enabled the Germans, who had intentionally refrained from occupying the monastery itself, to quickly move into the ruins making it a formidable fortress, but only small gains were obtained by the Allies. As the attacks on the Gustav Line ended, more German units then became available to resist the efforts to breakout from the Anzio beachhead.

Meanwhile, Hitler ordered the Germans at Anzio to defeat and destroy the invaders and a strong counterattack was directed at the British advancing towards Campaleone on February 3. After heavy fighting, the thrust was stopped and losses were so heavy that the British 1st Division was replaced by the newly-arrived US 45th Division. At the same time, the US 3rd Division was also attacked, but as the weather cleared, Allied aircraft had a field day and the attack was called off. Surprisingly, Kesselring had put together a considerable force without substantially weakening his defenses at Cassino. About ten days later, the Germans struck the five Allied divisions in the beachhead again with elements of ten divisions. Backed up by strong aerial attacks which opened up a gap in the sector of the US 45th Division, fourteen German battalions rushed forward along the Albano-Anzio road expecting to push the Allies back into the sea. However, the US 56th and the British 1st Divisions came to the aid of the 45th, and after a desperate battle with heavy Allied air attacks, the Panzergrenadiers were finally stopped. But Lucas had missed his initial opportunities for a successful offensive and his subsequent limited piecemeal attacks had not been strong enough to be effective.

Both Alexander and Clark saw that Lucas had failed to be aggressive, feared that he had lost the opportunity for the Allies to seize the initiative, and were

concerned that the Germans might gain control of the battle. Meanwhile Lucas, believing he was greatly outmatched by his enemy, would not move forward, and by January 29, the Germans at the Anzio front had outnumbered the Allies by 70,000 to 40,000 men. Again the Allies had missed a great opportunity for another dramatic victory which led to some of the most brutal head-to-head combat of the war. The abundant Allied naval and aircraft bombings proved to be of limited effect against aggressively encroaching infantry, and little progress was made by the VI Corps towards the seizure of Cisterna, Campoleone, and the capture of the dominating Alban Hills.

Some historians defend Lucas's caution at Anzio claiming that had he rushed forward after the landing he would have been badly mauled by the Germans who would have counterattacked his flanks and probably cut him off from his base at Anzio. They also point out that Clark had warned him not to "stick your neck out." In view of the failure of the Fifth Army to successfully breakout to meet the forces from Anzio, that advice was appropriate. On the other hand a rapid advance by Lucas, had he been able to hold out, would have denied Kesselring the advantage of the heights surrounding Anzio which enabled the Germans to be offensively successful against the invasion. Initially, the way to Rome had been so wide open that a jeep-load of Americans dashed to the city's outskirts immediately after the landing completely unharmed. As the axiom goes, success in war depends upon the aggressive application of force and victory is often lost without a quick attack or pursuit of a surprised or defeated enemy. Alan Brooke had even said that what was needed was "a thruster like George Patton or a British Corps commander." Undoubtedly, Lucas was thinking too much of the German counterattack at Salerno, and once again, over-caution involved the Allies in another lengthy battle with high casualties.

Not until the end of January did Lucas make his first serious attempt to breakout of the beachhead with an offensive in the direction of Campoleone and Cisterna not knowing that there were thirty-six enemy battalions with tanks and artillery in the area. His plans called for the British to attack and capture Campoleone while the Americans were to attack the Alban Hills by way of Cisterna and Albano. But in an attempt by two US Ranger battalions to infiltrate into Cisterna prior to an attack by the US 3rd Division, the Rangers lost their way, contact between units could not be maintained, a battalion commander was killed,

and they soon became involved in heavy fighting. With their escape routes cut-off, the Rangers were slaughtered and captured. Both Ranger battalions were lost, only six Rangers returned across the lines, and 99 percent of the men (761) were either killed or captured. It was one of the worst small-unit tragedies of the war.

Three Allied attempts were made to break into Cisterna, but after heavy resistance and large losses the offensive was ended. The twenty-four hour delay in getting the first attack underway, the late arrival of the 1st Division, and the failure of the Ranger mission doomed the operation. Clearly, the presence of strong enemy resistance, which the Allies should have known about by that time, was the key factor. Clark thought that if Lucas had been more aggressive, and had first used tank reconnaissance at Cisterna, the disaster could have been averted. And to the west at Campoleone on January 30, 1944, an equally disastrous ordeal awaited the 1st Division, whose losses became so heavy it had to be replaced by the US 45th Division. Another German offensive was launched on February 16 with frequent Luftwaffe attacks, and a gap was opened on the 45th's front that enabled fourteen German battalions led by tanks to rush down the Albano-Anzio road. Fortunately, heavy Allied air and naval bombing inflicted substantial losses on the crowded highway and the US 1st, 56th British, and 45th American divisions stopped the enemy at the final beachhead defensive line after a desperate struggle. Hitler ordered another unsuccessful counterattack in early March after which all German offensives were discontinued at Anzio.

Still the frustrating stalemate at Cassino continued with more Allied attacks preparatory to a great offensive in the spring. In spite of a bombardment by 190,000 artillery shells and 1,000 tons of aerial bombs on March 15, a regiment of the German 1st Parachute Division not only continued to occupy the town of Cassino, but again successfully held-off the third Allied attack. Finally, almost in desperation, Alexander planned Operation DIADEM to be a powerful drive up the Liri Valley with a simultaneous breakout from the Anzio beachhead. The Eighth Army would shift to the west relieving the units on the Cassino front while the Fifth Army would focus its attacks at the Garigliano and from Anzio. The main difficulty was that the invasion of southern France, as a diversion from the Normandy invasion, was being planned and units would be taken from the Italian campaign. But it was agreed no units would be withdrawn before the Gustav Line could be broken and a link-up could be made with the forces at

Anzio. Consequently, the operation had to be delayed until about two months after D-Day at Normandy and it would be May 11 before Alexander could get his breakthrough offensive underway.

At Anzio six Allied divisions were being held up by five German divisions that were backed up by four more in the nearby Rome area. On the Gustav Line sixteen Allied divisions were being held up by only six German divisions. Twelve of the American and British units were holding the line from Cassino to the Garigliano at the west coast with four more divisions in reserve. To the east of the Allied front nine divisions of the Eighth Army were supported by tanks and 1,000 guns. After a massive barrage from more than 2,000 guns and numerous air attacks, the Allied offensive finally got underway, but after three days, little progress was made against strong resistance. Only the four divisions of the French Corps got past one opposing enemy division and slipped behind the Garigliano where they were not expected. Soon they broke through the line and, as the German 71st Division pulled back, the US II Corps was able to drive ahead against the German 94th Division. Then the French moved through the gap and got through the secondary Hitler Line before it could be defended and caused the entire western part of the Gustav Line to suddenly cave-in. Even though Kesselring had sent three more divisions into the battle, they arrived too late and were chewed up by the powerful Allied forward drive. Finally on May 17, the German paratroopers were forced to withdraw, and at last, the Poles occupied the monastery which had dominated the battlefield. Thereafter, the controversial destruction of the Cassino monastery was effectively used as an example of "the utter senselessness and brutality of war," and it was estimated that the Allies had unnecessarily spent three tons of bombs for every German paratrooper that had become a casualty.

By this time, the breakout from the beachhead at Anzio was long overdue. Alexander ordered a strong drive eastward to capture Valmontone to cut Highway 6 that would trap much of the German forces withdrawing from the Cassino front. Then Rome was expected to quickly fall. But Mark Clark was determined to be the first to reach the Roman capital. When his 1st Armored and 3rd Infantry divisions managed to join up with the II Corps driving up along Route 7, Clark suddenly directed four of his divisions to the north towards Rome while only one division continued in the drive to Valmontone. At the

same time, the German Tenth Army deftly slipped away from the Cassino and Liri fronts and, without Clark to block their way towards Rome, escaped largely intact. Meanwhile, the US 36th Division succeeded in occupying the Alban Hills and on May 30, when Clark ordered the Fifth Army to drive forward, the II Corps took Valmontone while VI Corps led the advance on Route 7. With eleven divisions behind him, Clark was soon able to push his way northwards and on June 4 the Americans "liberated" the Holy City!

Only two days later, the largest and strongest amphibious military operation in history occurred at Normandy. Suddenly, the Italian campaign that had been the major Allied land operation of the war for one and a half years, and which had so dominated Allied concerns and had been the cause of so much controversy for so long, was pushed aside and all but forgotten, as the world's attention was focused on the most important Allied action of World War II. From that time on the Italian campaign had become simply "a sideshow." In fact, from the capture of Rome until the German surrender, the Italian struggle received little further notice throughout the last year of the war. But criticisms of Montgomery's conduct in Sicily, his dawdling leadership in southern Italy, the Allied stalemate at Cassino, Lucas's lack of aggression at Anzio, and Clark's unauthorized capture of the Holy City aroused some of the most disruptive controversies of the war. As someone said of the British dominated struggle, "Never had so many failed to overcome so few for so long with less success."

Operation DIADEM had finally ended the most difficult and frustrating Allied battle of the European war at a terrible cost. 18,000 Americans, 14,000 British and 10,000 French soldiers were lost in addition to numerous casualties by other Allied units. Thirty Allied divisions with almost unlimited resources, including air and naval support, had been all but defeated by twenty-two weak and under-supplied German divisions. Furthermore, the campaign failed to justify its heavy cost in men and materiel nor to fulfill its purposes. Not enough German divisions were drawn away from either Normandy nor the Soviet front to have any substantial effect on those campaigns. Indeed, German forces in France and the Low Countries were actually increased by six divisions. And Churchill's scheme for an Allied assault on the "underbelly of Europe" to head-off the Soviet occupation of East Europe was never realistic. Obviously, had there been no campaign in Italy more German divisions would have been available to

resist the cross-channel attack and to oppose the Russians in the East. However, had the resources committed to the Italian campaign been used for an earlier attack against Normandy, the German defense would not have been as strong and the long and costly land battles of Sicily and Italy would have been avoided.

Supporters of the campaign claimed that it forced Mussolini out of office and led to the surrender of the Italian government. The fact was, however, that the Italian armed forces had already collapsed and the surrender was of little gain for the Allies either politically or militarily in that it failed to bring the end of the war any closer. Not only was it an extremely costly campaign in lives and materiel, but the use of its resources for an earlier attack in France could have greatly shortened the war. It is also certain that the transfer of units from Italy for the Allied ANVIL landing in southern France proved to be a major mistake since the operation failed to draw any units from Normandy to southern France, it failed to have any appreciable influence on the conduct of the battle in Normandy, and it certainly weakened and made more costly the subsequent Allied offensive in Italy.

Even the capture of Rome had little more than a psychological effect on the campaign and in the city the war was soon all but forgotten, except for those who had the misfortune to still be involved in the deadly combat. The Germans had withdrawn intact from the Gustav Line and, while executing more successful delaying actions, managed to establish another tough Gothic Line above Florence about eighty miles north of Rome. By August 15, Alexander had readied another offensive operation which he expected would breakthrough to the northern plain and gain entrance through the Alpine passes to Austria and southern Germany. That prospect was, however, completely unrealistic since it did not take into account the extreme difficulties the river barriers and the rugged Alpine mountains would pose for the Allies.

After the fall of Rome almost two and a half months passed before the Allies were ready to renew a substantial offensive against the enemy. That gave the Germans enough time not only to prepare their new defenses above Florence, taking advantage of the mountainous terrain in northern Italy, but caused the Allies heavy losses as they continued to struggle against the new enemy positions. Once Rome had been taken, the Americans expected the maximum cooperation of the Allies would be focused on the drive to Berlin across France. However,

Churchill and Brooke thought otherwise as they continued to press for aggressive operations in Italy. But Eisenhower made the final decision that ANVIL (later DRAGOON) would be a definite help to the stalemate that had developed in Normandy, and three divisions of the US VI Corps and four divisions of the French II Corps, along with two-thirds of the Allied air forces in Italy, were transferred to support the invasion of southern France.

Throughout the summer months in northern Italy the Germans continued their successful delaying practices so that major defenses behind them could be completed. The Allied pursuit was slow and inconsistent resulting in more piecemeal attacks that continued to enable the enemy to consistently withdraw northward. Then Kesselring managed to strengthen his defense with four new divisions and a heavy tank regiment which enabled the XIV Panzer Corps to hold off the US II Corps, his I Parachute Corps effectively opposed the French Corps, the LXXVI Panzer Corps stopped both the British X and XIII Corps, and the XV Mountain Corps held the line against the Polish II Corps at the Adriatic coast.

The Allies had hoped their fall offensive would not only draw away German units from France, but that once the battle of Normandy was won, the Germans would be prevented from using their forces in Italy to stop an Allied drive into Austria through the Tyrol. The Eighth Army resumed its coverage of the Adriatic coast, hoping its drive on Rimini would tie down the enemy so that the Fifth Army could push in the center towards Bologna, where the Eighth Army could then push on to Lombardy. Named Operation OLIVE, it surprised the Germans on August 25, but the Eighth's tanks and vehicles were slowed by numerous water barriers. Then, as Kesselring received German reinforcements, heavy rain began and the Eighth Army was stopped at the Ausa River on September 6. However, the little-noticed Poles had advanced ten miles along the east coast and, as the Allied pressure increased all along the line, Kesselring ordered a general pull back into the Gothic Line. That permitted the US II Corps and the British XIII Corps to fight their way across the Arno and through the Il Giogo pass north of Florence. By October 2, Clark started-up another offensive towards Bologna but, by the end of the month, both the Fifth and Eighth Armies had bogged down again.

Soon command changes took place on both sides of the line. Alexander succeeded Wilson, Clarke succeeded Alexander, and Vietinghoff succeeded

Kesselring, all of which brought little change to the conduct of the struggle. The last Allied operation of 1944 involved another offensive to liberate Bologna and Ravenna and, although the Canadians succeeded at Ravenna, the addition of three more German divisions stopped any further advance by the Eighth Army. By that time, the Allied forces were exhausted, the weather was miserable, and five Allied divisions had been taken from Italy preparatory for the spring offensive into Germany from France and the Low Countries. But in Italy, defensive winter positions were taken and preparations were begun for a spring offensive against the Gothic line. In the meantime, the performance of the Allied forces in Italy had gone from bad to worse. The great enthusiasm for an early victory, after the breakthrough at Cassino and the fall of Rome, had ended up in the same kind of "stubborn and slow-yielding resistance" which had been so frustrating and costly before Rome. And the morale of the troops was at a new low as the number of Allied desertions had reached alarming proportions.

By March 1945, the Allies were ready for what was hoped would be their last powerful offensive in Italy. Seventeen divisions including six Italian combat groups, plus six independent armored brigades and four independent infantry brigades, were readied to assault twenty-three German divisions combined with four "so-called" Italian divisions. There would be 536,000 Allied soldiers plus 70,000 Italian soldiers against 491,000 Germans and 108,000 Italians. While practically equal in total numbers of military personnel, Eighth Army's front had a superiority of 2 to 1 in fighting men and artillery, plus a 3 to 1 advantage in armored vehicles. Most importantly, the Allies had almost total control of the skies with massive bombing capabilities over all movement and transportation which left the enemy with limited supplies and a critical shortage of fuel for tanks and trucks. In addition, the Allies were helped by diversionary actions against German troops by about 60,000 Italian partisans and, with Adolf Hitler forbidding any strategic withdrawals, the Germans had no choice but to offer "an increasingly hopeless sacrificial resistance."

With the coming of spring after three months of inaction, the Allies were reinvigorated in strength and in spirit. New personnel, weapons, equipment and supplies had, in effect, created a new Army Group under Mark Clark. Furthermore, in Italy as well as in the West and on the Eastern Front, the spirit of victory was widespread as Allied and Soviet forces were approaching the final

assault on Germany. And it was generally believed that the war in Europe would soon be over. On April 9 the "Spring Offensive" against the Gothic Line began with the Eighth Army unleashing a major blow across the Senio River towards Bastia-Argenta and the rear of Bologna. Five days later the Fifth Army attack, aided by heavy aerial bombing, achieved a breakthrough and as the whole front caved-in, rushed on to Bologna and the Po River. Vietinghoff had no more reserves and asked Hitler for permission to withdraw behind the Po. When it was refused, he withdrew anyway. By then the American armor was behind him, most of the Germans were surrounded, and Verona was captured. At the same time, knowing the end was near, the partisans ordered attacks everywhere. The mountain routes out of Italy were blocked, and on April 28 the partisans caught and hung Mussolini and his mistress who were placed on public display. From April 25 onward, large numbers of Germans began to surrender and the Allies were largely unopposed. And by April 29, the New Zealanders had occupied Venice, then rushed on to enter Trieste on May 2.

Since February 1945, S.S. General Karl Wolff had been negotiating through intermediaries with Allen Dulles, head of the American secret service in Switzerland, for the surrender of the German forces in Italy. Wolff knew that the end was inevitable and feared a Communist takeover in Italy, as well as in Germany, and wanted to prevent a Hitler-ordered holdout in an Alpine Redoubt. Thus Vietinghoff and Wolff ignored Hitler's order to fight to the end, and on April 29 an unconditional surrender to the Allies was executed effective May 2, just six days ahead of the end of the war in Europe.

The Italian campaign had mercifully ended but the controversies of the most difficult period of Anglo-American warfare relations would not be soon forgotten. More questions have been raised about the operations in Sicily and Italy than in any other phase of the war and, unfortunately, it became the main basis for the longest and most intense British and American dispute over Allied strategy for the entire European war. Fundamentally, it started with the disagreement over the American desire to apply brute force, instead of the indirect attack, as the quickest way to get to Berlin and to end the war. It was also a competitive showdown between the more experienced and sophisticated strategy of the British and the more simple and direct application of massed men and materiel as advocated by the Americans. The fact was, however, that most of the terrible

consequences of the campaign arose from poor leadership, both political and military, by both sides which resulted in mistakes, omissions and blunders that caused the longest, most difficult, and most costly Allied land campaign of World War II. Carlo D'Este says that the Italian campaign was "the largest, dreariest and most expensive Allied endeavor of the entire war." Yet the major tragedy was that little was learned from the mistakes and blunders of the Sicilian campaign and were repeated in the struggle on the Italian mainland.

The most long-lasting difficulty of the Allied wartime partnership began when Alan Brooke was permitted to persuade Winston Churchill to place Bernard Montgomery in command of the Eighth Army in Africa. The little man who hated his mother was hyped up as the "Hero of El Alamein" to rally British morale and patriotism. And since the war, the myth has been promoted that he was the "greatest general" of World War II "who never lost a battle." The fact is, however, that in spite of consistently having overwhelming superiority in men, equipment and supplies as well as ULTRA intercepts regarding the enemy's whereabouts, capabilities and intentions from Africa to the end of the war, the Battle of El Alamein was the only seriously contested battle that Montgomery ever won, and even its results were inconclusive. The reality was that due to Montgomery's "over-caution," which would characterize his operations thereafter, Rommel had successfully conducted one of the longest and most brilliant withdrawals in military history. Actually, the pursuit did not end until months later when additional American forces helped Montgomery to finally end the greatly unequal struggle in Tunisia.

In the famous Battle of Second El Alamein which began in October 1942, Montgomery not only had the advantage of overwhelming resources of men, weapons and tanks, but through the ULTRA intercepts, he also knew about Rommel's critical shortage of fuel and tanks. Still his initial attack failed and he claimed, as he would claim in all actions thereafter, that everything had gone "according to plan." His second offensive started five days later, and even though Rommel had only 90 tanks left to 800 for Montgomery, the quick German countermove stopped the British again. Yet Monty required three days to get another attack underway. Nonetheless, Rommel with only a remnant of his armor remaining, destroyed 200 more British tanks. Finally, with only 30 operable tanks remaining while Montgomery still had 600—an advantage of 20 to 1,

the Africa Korps had no choice but to withdraw and regroup. Adolf Hitler, however, canceled any withdrawal, and during the conflicting orders, the British broke through between the Germans and the Italians. Then, as Montgomery's forces had actually gotten behind Rommel creating a great opportunity for the destruction of the entire Africa Korps, the British halted their drive at darkness. As a result of the lack of vigorous pursuit, bad traffic control, inexcusable delays, and poor leadership, the Eighth Army captured only a few stragglers and some abandoned tanks with exhausted fuel.

Rommel had not only succeeded in escaping destruction and capture by Montgomery's vastly superior forces, but he continued to inflict considerable damage and great losses on British forces as he continued his legendary withdrawal tactics across North Africa. It was circumstance, not generalship, that bestowed upon Montgomery the legend of the "Hero of El Alamein," and from then until the end of his career he continued to intentionally misrepresent facts to maintain his incredible ego. Understandably, it was immensely important for the British, after Dunkirk, to win a battle and to acquire a hero not only for morale, but to inspire the future success of the Commonwealth forces in the difficult struggle that lay ahead.

In *The Desert Generals* by British historian Corelli Barnett, he says that actually Erwin Rommel's Africa Corps had been beaten by the British in the Battle of Alam Halfa using General Claude Auchinleck's plans and that the German forces had been reduced to the point that they could only put up a skirmish preparatory to a retreat. In fact, he points out that in the Battle of El Alamein Montgomery not only had over a 1,000 tanks to Rommel's 200, but that the British forces consisted of 220,000 men compared to 53,000 Germans and 45,000 Italians. Furthermore, Barnett contends that the Second Battle of Alamein "must go down in history as an unnecessary battle" since it was known that the Allied invasion of North Africa would occur about two weeks later. Therefore, Rommel would have had no choice but to retreat due to the danger of being completely cutoff by the Allied invasion. The fact is, that the vaunted "Hero of El Alamein," the "greatest British General since Wellington," was not such a great general after all. In fact, unfortunately, there were no great British generals at all in World War II.

In Sicily as well, Monty's over-caution had prevented the entrapment and capture of the German forces before their spectacular escape. On the Italian

mainland, his "dawdling over-caution" failed to relieve the Salerno beachhead and prevented the destruction of major German forces before they could set-up the frustrating and costly stalemate at Cassino. Then later, Montgomery's tardiness and over-caution at Caen denied the Allies access to the airfields and the tank terrain which would have avoided the lengthy stalemate during the Normandy campaign. His repeated attempts, with vastly superior forces including massive air and naval bombardments, continuously failed to breakout of the Caen area and his lack of aggressiveness prevented the entrapment of the entire German forces in the Falaise pocket.

After the American breakout in Normandy and Patton's dash across France, Montgomery's Eighth Army had finally rushed forward along the French coast against little opposition. Preoccupied mainly with the opportunity to be the liberator of Antwerp, like Clark at Rome, Monty made the critical blunder of bypassing large German forces in the Scheldt Area which greatly delayed the opening of the port of Antwerp, and denied Allied forces the fuel and supply so desperately needed to continue the pursuit of the retreating enemy into Germany. It had been the escape of the German Seventh Army from the Scheldt which greatly assisted the Germans to decimate Allied troops in Monty's ambitiously conceived and poorly executed MARKET- GARDEN operation that resulted in the most fouled-up Allied offensive in Europe.

Without question, Montgomery's constant warfare with Eisenhower greatly damaged Allied leadership and success. Possessing possibly the greatest ego in military history, Montgomery considered himself to be the best general in the Allied armies and believed he should have been Supreme Commander of all operations in Italy, and later, in western Europe. He was directly responsible for the greatest difficulties of the Supreme Commander, and by the distraction, dissension, and controversies he intentionally caused, great harm was done to the prosecution of the war in Europe and the attainment of an earlier victory. Although Eisenhower was too much of a gentleman to say so after the war, Montgomery caused him more trouble, distraction and disruption than any enemy general or even Hitler himself. In this author's opinion, Eisenhower's greatest blunder of the war was that he did not seize the opportunity Churchill gave him to fire Montgomery and remove the major obstacle to greater Allied success in Europe.

With the appointment of the American Eisenhower as Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force, it had appeared to be proper that the British should have command of the ground forces for OVERLORD. Ike and Churchill wanted Alexander but Alan Brooke, not only wanted Montgomery to have the job because he believed Monty would be better than the Americans, but he also wanted to show up the Americans as the incompetent generals he thought they were. So Brooke successfully convinced Churchill to give Montgomery command of the largest invasion force ever assembled. When Monty left Italy to command the OVERLORD assault operations, he fully believed he could do a better job than Ike as Supreme Commander. In Italy he had been bitterly critical of both Eisenhower and Alexander, saying that it had been their leadership which had made the Italian campaign one of the worst military operations in history. What he said may have been partially true, but he clearly believed that if he had been the overall commander, Italy would have been another triumphant victory for the "Hero of Alamein."

Without doubt, Bernard Montgomery was the most overrated general of World War II. He not only had an unlikeable personality but he lacked the abilities of even a reasonably well talented general, he consistently failed to overcome the enemy in battle in spite of greatly superior forces, none of his major operations succeeded in obtaining their assigned objectives, and he caused more trouble for the Allied coalition than all other American and British officers combined. In fact, as one G.I. said, "Montgomery caused Ike more trouble than did all the Germans." There was an almost total lack of any redeeming virtue in the man's character and personality. He was an eccentric bore who was disliked by almost everyone who knew him, was repulsively conceited, always believed he was right, would never admit a mistake, and his only major positive contribution to Britain's war effort was that he was said to have greatly improved the morale of British soldiers and that he met the need of the British public for a national hero.

Finally, we must ask if the Italian campaign was worth the sacrifice, cost and effort? Had Winston Churchill and Alan Brooke been right in pressing the Mediterranean campaigns upon the Americans? What benefits were derived from the long, torturous and deadly campaigns? Many historians, as well as this author, are convinced that had the Allies used the same assets for an earlier cross-channel attack, the Atlantic Wall would have been weaker, the OVERLORD assault

would have been more successful, and the Germans would have been defeated sooner in Normandy. Then the war would have ended at least by the summer of 1944 and many of the postwar political difficulties would have been averted.

Others claim, however, that the campaign in Italy more than justified its cost. They say that German divisions were diverted from France and the Low Countries as well as from the Russian front, Mussolini was ousted, Italy was liberated and joined the Allies against Germany, the Mediterranean was generally cleared for passage of Allied ships, and that the threat of strong enemy forces approaching Germany from the south helped distract Hitler's concentration on the Eastern Front and away from the build-up of his defenses against invasion in the west. They contend that while Allied leadership proved to be disappointing, considerable experience was gained relating to amphibious invasions, air, naval, and ground operations which were beneficial to the success of the Normandy campaign. Particularly, American military leadership gained the experience which generally proved to be dominant and decisive in the subsequent phases of the war on the Western Front. Glaring weaknesses, as well as some strengths, had become apparent in coalition warfare which resulted in improved cooperation and efficiency in much of the remainder of the war.

Finally, a substantial part of Germany's armed forces were tied down in the Mediterranean area and, to a great degree were destroyed, and could not be used elsewhere. In conclusion, it can truthfully be said that the men of many nations who fought for the Allies in the Mediterranean campaigns made a valiant and essential contribution under the most difficult conditions in the west towards the liberation of the peoples of Europe who had been subjected to the barbaric and evil domination of the Nazi and Fascist dictatorships of Germany and Italy.

Chapter 10

The Invasion of Normandy

The Allied invasion of Normandy France on June 6, 1944 was the largest amphibious military assault in history and became the most important Allied operation of World War II. It represented the long-awaited beginning of the Allied continental offensive which was sustained until the unconditional surrender of Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany. However, it was also a highly controversial and intensely disputed operation that created the most divisive aspects of the war between the Western Allies. While the Americans believed the invasion would be the most direct and least costly means to defeat Germany, the British believed it would result in a frontal assault against Germany's strongest defenses with the heavy casualties of a World War I attrition which would again decimate their limited military resources. It was a lengthy and strongly contested disagreement between the British and the Americans involving the role and importance of political considerations in the conduct of military operations. Lasting throughout the British American wartime relationship, it caused continuing and distracting controversies within the wartime coalition that critically affected the outcome of World War II.

Winston Churchill and his colleagues, after centuries of British involvement with European intrigue and spheres-of-influence, saw the conflict with Nazi Germany as a critical challenge which threatened the existence of the political interests of the British Empire and the Western world. Franklin Roosevelt, who personally dominated American politics and foreign policy, consistently opposed the injection of what he considered to be political considerations regarding American military strategical interests. In fact, he insisted that most political settlements had to be deferred to the end of the war so as to avoid any misunderstandings with the Soviet Union, whose cooperation in support of his United

Nations and with the war against Japan took precedence over any other policy issue. The Soviet Union, with its well-established record of antagonism for the West, and which fought solely for its own survival and for the advancement of the Communist ideology, was voluntarily accorded special important political considerations by President Roosevelt and his principal foreign policy advisor Harry Hopkins. The Soviets were given what became, in effect, an influence and control over Allied actions which, unfortunately, greatly altered the course of the war to the political disadvantage of the future interests of the United States and the free world.

When Germany attacked Russia on June 22, 1941, Churchill and Roosevelt were naturally greatly relieved that Britain would no longer stand alone against Hitler, and appropriately, they had immediately notified Stalin that Britain and the United States would render all possible aid in their common fight against Hitler's Nazism. The brutality of the Nazi assault had shocked the Western leaders who feared that the Soviets would be quickly conquered and that Britain would then be easily overcome. Within weeks Hopkins was in Moscow as Roosevelt's personal representative "to extend all possible aid to the Soviet Union at the earliest possible time." Stalin, knowing the survival of the Soviet Union depended on additional resources for a powerful counteroffensive, told Hopkins that with adequate supplies of weapons, aviation fuel and aluminum for aircraft construction, "we can fight for three or four years." In addition, the Soviets launched strong propaganda campaigns to force their new allies in the west to begin a "second front" to relieve Nazi pressure in the east. At the time, Stalin showed no preference as to where such an operation should take place, but as soon as the Soviets had succeeded in stopping the German advance on Moscow, his attention was immediately shifted to efforts to gain "Big Three" postwar political settlements favorable to the Soviet Union.

From the beginning of World War II, it was obvious to the people of Great Britain and its Commonwealth nations, that there could be no hope for a successful assault on Hitler's occupation of Europe without the participation of America's huge reserves of manpower, weapons, and logistical support. Above all, Winston Churchill knew there was little hope for saving Great Britain without the help of the United States, and he never lost faith that he would get it. When the Prime Minister and the President conferred at the Atlantic Conference in

August 1941 before the United States entered the war, the British presented their first plan for the invasion of the continent labeled Operation ROUNDUP. After the great tragedies of World War I, and their recent disastrous attempt to land at Dieppe, they wished to avoid, and they believed there would be no need for, "vast armies on the continent" since small armored "peripheral forces" could strike hardest and gain a quick and decisive victory. Then, however, there was no indication that the invasion of Europe would become the most controversial issue of the war between the Western partners nor that it would be the largest amphibious operation ever mounted in the history of warfare.

Shortly after Pearl Harbor, serious US-British war studies began with priority on an aggressive action against Hitler's military occupation of Europe. Both Churchill and Roosevelt were anxious to respond to Stalin's persistent demands for a second front to draw off German forces from the desperate struggle of the Red Army. In March 1942 Roosevelt cabled Churchill calling for "plans for the establishment of a new front on the European continent," and he assured Stalin the invasion would take place in 1942, which was, of course, impractical. Furthermore, by then the President knew that the United States and Great Britain were involved in strong disagreement as to when, and with what means, they could most effectively attack and defeat the enemy.

Top British and American officials soon met at Washington and agreed that they could launch a combined armed forces of about eight million men against Germany and Italy and that Operation BOLERO would immediately begin to build-up Allied resources in Britain for an attack on Nazi occupied Europe. Since the disaster at Dunkirk, the British had recognized the urgent necessity for new offensive actions against Hitler. And the Americans wanted a specific attack across the English channel against the so-called "impregnable" Atlantic Wall as soon as possible. The British, however, considering their meager assets and recent defeats of their continental attacks, believed the American plan to be totally unrealistic and the issue became a controversy which dominated Allied relations for almost two years. The enthusiastic "go for broke" Americans were convinced that the best way to help the Soviets defeat the German army required a concentrated Allied attack as soon as possible on the most direct route to Berlin. Furthermore, they requested a firm commitment on a specific date for the attack since Harry Hopkins had convinced Franklin Roosevelt that unless the "Second

Front" was opened in the west as soon as possible, Russia would be unable to survive Hitler's massive onslought.

The United States, with the advantage of almost unlimited resources and being traditionally opposed to becoming involved in Europe's complicated politics, preferred a powerful and quick defeat of the enemy with minimal loss of life as well as the return home of its armed forces as soon as possible. American military leaders were convinced that a frontal attack was essential for the quickest defeat of the enemy. The British as a small maritime power had long experience with balances-of-power in Europe and had used "numerous pheripheral military operations" for the successful establishment of its worldwide Empire. Thus developed the longest and most serious hassle of the war which greatly increased attitudes of jealousy, criticism and lack of cooperation within the coalition and, unfortunately, negatively impacted the Allied conduct of the war.

At Washington in mid-1942 the Prime Minister mainly discussed with the President Russia's requests for a Second Front, although the major problem for the Allies, at that time, concerned the furious Battle of the Atlantic. From September 1939 to December 1941, almost ten million tons of shipping had been sunk with only one-third being replaced. Consequently, Churchill believed there was no way to stage a successful cross-channel attack during 1942. He did believe, however, that small amphibious raids could be made in France and Norway to test defenses and to get information and experience useful for later operations. At another Washington meeting in December 1942, a general agreement on Allied strategy for the war in Europe was reached including the following priorities: (1) to win the war against Germany; (2) to gain victory in the Battle of the Atlantic; (3) to prevent Germany from taking North Africa and the Middle East; and (4) to attack southern Europe across the Mediterranean or by landings in western Europe possibly in 1943. Meanwhile, the Soviets continued to press for a Second Front and Stalin had suddenly astonished the British by demanding that Russia's pre-war occupation of part of Poland and all of the Baltic States had to be recognized by the Western Allies.

The British were very much concerned about their defeats in raids on Dieppe and Norway and, understandably, questioned the likelihood that the Allies could successfully get ashore against Hitler's powerful defenses in France. Churchill opposed another attempt to invade the continent without adequate forces and

resources for a secure landing. Instead, the British wanted a series of limited surprise attacks where only weak resistance could be expected. Furthermore, they were convinced that greater progress could be made against Germany with fewer losses by attacking through the Mediterranean area which would draw away German forces from Russia and France. They also claimed that their strategy would enable the Allies to take the offensive much earlier since less shipping and transfer of personnel would be involved. The Prime Minister further believed such operations against the "soft underbelly" of Southern Europe would gain the important assistance of local partisan forces and would enable the Allies to advance more quickly into Germany. But Roosevelt and the American military disagreed and believed the British preoccupation with the Mediterranean area was based on the preservation of their colonial interests.

The American military had successfully convinced Roosevelt that a cross-channel assault would be the shortest route to Berlin and that more of Germany's forces would be destroyed which would give the Soviets the quickest possible relief. In fact, their preliminary plans called for the Allied offensive to be staged in England and would be launched at the earliest date to help the Russians. Labeled ROUNDUP (later OVERLORD) the concept involved thirty American and eighteen British divisions to be launched by Spring of 1943, and hopefully, would prevent a Russian defeat or surrender. An even earlier operation named SLEDGEHAMMER had been intended as a smaller emergency landing in event of a collapse in Germany, or in preparation for ROUNDUP, to enable a quicker and more powerful assault across France into Germany.

Roosevelt's impulsive commitment for a Second Front in 1942 led him to take other actions which enabled Soviet interests to exert a questionable and excessive influence on American policies. And to the surprise and distress of his military leaders, FDR had suddenly and unexpectedly committed US forces to join with Britain in the first Allied major offensive for the invasion of North Africa in 1942. While the immediate intention of the operation was to cut-off Rommel's long retreat from El Alamein, the British had, in effect, succeeded in involving the United States in the support of their Mediterranean strategy which would consume massive Allied assets, delay the most important cross-channel invasion of Europe, and in the opinion of the American military, would provide no decisive military results. Clearly, the questionable North African-Sicilian-Italian

campaigns prevented the invasion of Normandy in 1943 when Hitler's "Fortress Europa" was largely a myth. Had the Allies not done so the disastrous and costly stalemate in Italy would have been avoided, the war could have been ended in 1944 instead of 1945, and many thousands of lives and vast resources could have been saved. Nonetheless, the Mediterranean-Normandy dispute became the most divisive issue of the war between the Allied partners. While the US-British invasion of North Africa helped to bring an end to the war in North Africa, the capture of Rommel's already defeated and retreating Africa Corps was inevitable. Without a doubt, Roosevelt's precipitous support of the British Mediterranean strategy was one of the costliest blunders of World War II.

Shortly thereafter, Churchill and Roosevelt wanted Stalin to meet with them regarding future Allied strategy but, claiming the war prevented his absence, the Soviet Marshal insisted they fulfill their commitment for a Second Front. Subsequently, when the western leaders met at Casablanca in January 1943, numerous problems interfered with their efforts to keep their pledge. It would be May 1943 before the North African campaign could end, a successful cross-channel campaign would require up to a hundred divisions, massive logistics and shipping would be necessary, and Allied air supremacy had to be established over the area. They believed that left no alternative but to postpone the operation until Spring 1944. Believing that the victory in North Africa should be followed up as soon as possible, the British pressed to use the substantial Allied resources already in the area to invade nearby Sicily and Italy. They argued that it would draw away enemy troops from both Russia and France, the Soviets would receive the quickest possible help, Italy could be forced out of the war, and the Italian airfields could be used to bomb German refineries and factories. Still, the Americans argued, such considerations were relatively unimportant concerning the commitment and the opportunity of OVERLORD. Also, recognizing the possibility of heavy losses in Italy, as there had been in North Africa, they threatened that if their shipping was not to be used in an attack on France, a higher priority would require that it be deployed against Japan.

Throughout the conference at Casablanca, the Allied controversy over OVERLORD continued to be the major issue, and even the Americans were divided. Admiral Ernest King believed his navy would be less vulnerable in the Mediterranean and General Henry Arnold liked the access to Italian bases for

airstrikes against Germany. But Harry Hopkins, with his decisive influence on Franklin Roosevelt, was determined that the demand of the Soviets for a Second Front in France should be met. So General George Marshall continued to insist on the invasion of Northern France in opposition to Churchill's Mediterranean "ventures." In France, the main planning problem involved the site for the landings. Calais would be the shortest route with the best air protection, but it was also the most obvious site with the heaviest German defenses. The most important planning factors included the condition of the beaches, weather and tides, status of fortifications, availability of port facilities, nature of the terrain, enemy strength, air interdiction of the area, potential aircraft landing sites, and proximity to enemy concentration of armor and reserves. Eventually Normandy, although a substantially longer voyage, was agreed upon as the site with "the best chance of success." Still, the British continued to believe that the Allies should apply pressure against the Germans in the Mediterranean from their base in North Africa since it would be a year before the cross-channel attack could be undertaken.

The Americans, however, continued to oppose the British position that Mediterranean operations would benefit OVERLORD. General Marshall argued that the British proposal would draw-off resources from the cross-channel invasion much as the Germans had been bled attempting to rescue Mussolini in North Africa. Besides, it was claimed, since the attack on France had to be postponed and the American navy had just suffered crippling defeats by the Japanese, limited resources could be better used against Japan. They also stressed that the American people would agree to send large numbers of troops to Europe only to defeat Germany by the quickest and most direct means. Reflecting the President's views that political considerations should have no part in Allied strategic decisions, they made it clear that they had little respect for strategies which they believed to be politically motivated. Yet, the British persisted by proposing Sicily for the next Allied assault as a preliminary to force Italy out of the war and to draw German forces from the fronts in Russia and France. Thus Winston Churchill, knowing well that wars are fought for political as well as military purposes, continued to press for an Allied attack on Southern Europe. He was, of course, concerned about British interests in the Middle East and in Asia, but he also believed it to be a more direct and less defended route to Central Germany that would enable the Allies to end the war before Soviet Communism

could occupy the vacuum created by Germany's defeat. Churchill also was very much aware that their disastrous attacks against strong German defenses in Norway, Dieppe and St. Nazaire had convinced them that superior forces had to be landed at unexpected places for successful amphibious operations. Moreover, constant Soviet demands for OVERLORD caused Churchill to be more determined than ever to fight for a major Allied offensive against Germany from the Mediterranean. He was very much concerned that Hitler might be overthrown before OVERLORD could be launched which would leave Central Europe open to Soviet occupation.

Finally, the Americans agreed to undertake Operation HUSKY to invade Sicily since men and equipment were available in nearby North Africa, although they resented that it implied operations on the Italian mainland. But, at least, the Yanks were relieved that the Brits had been forced to reach an agreement to invade France. Meanwhile, in view of Allied commitments in the Mediterranean area, the Trident Conference at Washington in May 1943 concluded that it would be impossible to assemble the necessary transport, equipment and troops for a successful campaign on the continent in 1943, so OVERLORD was postponed until May 1944. At American insistence, it was also agreed that forces from the Mediterranean operations would be withdrawn to begin the build-up for OVERLORD, as well as to support the struggle against Japan. That, however, proved to be a costly error for when Italy capitulated the forces were not available to stage a quick strike which would have denied the Germans the opportunity to develop their nearly impenetrable defenses. Consequently, the way was opened for two years of the most desperate and costly combat of the war.

In August 1943 the Allied conference at Quebec approved the plan and preparations for OVERLORD to get underway in the United Kingdom in spite of British reservations about adequate strength being available to break through Hitler's expected heavy fortifications. The Anglo-American assault on the beaches at Normandy was set for May 1, 1944 and would consist of three divisions and two airborne brigades with an immediate follow-up by two additional divisions. After a break-out from the beachhead between Caen and Carentan, the port at Cherbourg was to be captured which would enable at least eighteen divisions to be placed ashore within the first two weeks.

When Marshal Stalin learned of yet another postponement of the Second Front, he was furious. He cabled Churchill citing promises repeatedly broken for over a year while the Soviet Red Army had fought desperately to deny Hitler the conquest of Russia with little help from Britain or the United States. It was, in fact, a charge of bad faith. Stalin recalled his Ambassadors from London and Washington and he indefinitely postponed Roosevelt's request for a meeting. Unrealistically, Roosevelt and Churchill feared that Stalin might make a separate peace with Hitler which enabled the Communist dictator to unjustifiably manipulate the Allied leaders for disastrous political consequences. Instead, it should have been obvious that both the Nazi and the Communist totalitarian ideologies were committed to world domination and that their life and death struggle could not end without the total extinction of their ultimate adversaries—the free and independent peoples of the world.

By November 1943, with the essential help of substantial Western aid, the Soviets had forced the Nazis on the defensive so that when the first meeting of the "Big Three" took place at Tehran, Stalin had been given the balance-of-power which he cleverly used to advance the political interests of the Soviet Union. He knew that his powerful offensives had become capable of driving the Nazis back to Berlin and that the destruction of Germany would leave a vacuum throughout Central Europe which could be filled by Soviet Communism. He also believed he had succeeded without the military help of the West and that their failure to fulfill their promises in his struggle against Hitler would make them vulnerable and cooperative for the accomplishments of Soviet aims. In effect, he had gained a veto over the plan for the major Western offensive of the war and, at the same time, he craftily said that the Red Army would begin an offensive in the East which would eliminate any need for a diversion in Southeast Europe.

The Big Three meeting at Tehran was opened by Roosevelt when he announced that all Allied planning had been based on the relief of the Soviet front and that the failure to open the Second Front during 1943 had been due to the shortage of landing craft. He also mentioned that he and Churchill had considered a new Allied offensive from the Adriatic to join up with Tito's partisans in Yugoslavia for a drive into Rumania which greatly disturbed Harry Hopkins. Instead, Hopkins had wanted such plans to be discussed first with their Soviet ally to be sure that the West did only what would most help the Soviet Union in

its fight with Germany. Obviously, an Adriatic attack would be a serious threat to Soviet interests and Stalin began his remarks with comments on the Pacific war, then in an obvious bid to get further Soviet concessions, he suddenly surprised the Americans by stating that Russia would enter the war against Japan when Germany was defeated. Then, in an effort to avoid any Allied complications with his plan to communize all of East Europe, he added several observations: Italy was of little significance in the war; the Alps would prove to be impenetrable; the Balkans were too far from Germany; the best and the most direct way to Germany would be across France; and he hoped OVERLORD would get underway as soon as possible. Churchill assured him that he and the President agreed on the importance of OVERLORD, that one million men would assault the continent in May-July 1944, and that the cross-channel attack had always been the priority operation for the West.

Later, Churchill raised the Mediterranean operation again and Stalin asked him bluntly if he really believed in OVERLORD, or had he just been trying to please the Soviets? Churchill replied that although he supported OVERLORD, a decision had to be made about the use of the forces in Italy. Stalin countered by requesting that the Mediterranean forces be used to invade southern France to help the attack on Northern France. Then, to settle the issue, Stalin insisted on being told who would command OVERLORD? It was apparent to the British that Stalin strongly opposed the use of Allied forces in either Southern Europe or the Balkans which might conflict with Russian occupations. Churchill was aware that Stalin was determined to keep the West out of the areas he had the intent of "liberating," but Roosevelt intentionally avoided any indication which might cause Stalin to think that the President was siding with Britain against Soviet interests. Thus, in effect, the partnership of the "Grand Alliance" was abandoned when FDR refused to support the Prime Minister on important issues of Western interest and began speaking against British interests when he was alone with the Red Marshal.

As pointed out earlier, the fact was that the American President had openly courted favor with the Soviet leader and carefully avoided any disagreement with him. According to author Robert Sherwood, Roosevelt's belief that he had won Stalin's friendship "exercised a most important influence on the policy which Roosevelt pursued between Tehran and his next meeting with Stalin at Yalta."

Unfortunately for the cause of freedom, Stalin had sized-up the politician Franklin Roosevelt and had seen that America would pose no threat to the development of Soviet dominance in Central Europe. In fact, he was convinced that he had won the opportunity to occupy East Europe, that the Soviet Union's future security would be assured, and that international Communism would be established as a worldwide political system without effective interference from the decadent Western capitalists.

Lastly at Tehran, after a lengthy opposition by the British, the combined military staffs agreed that a simultaneous invasion of the southern coast of France with forces from the Italian campaign would be of substantial help to OVERLORD. The indomitable Churchill, however, continued to champion Allied attacks against the "soft underbelly" of Europe. But he soon realized that his long struggle for Western political interests did not have the support of his American partner and that he would not be able to prevail against both the Russians and the Americans. In fact, the British had concluded that their American cousins were teaming up with the Soviets against them by taking troops away from the Italian campaign for the unnecessary ANVIL attack in Southern France.

It had been apparent that the bulk of the new troops, equipment and supplies necessary for a successful Normandy invasion would have to come from the United States and that the commander of OVERLORD should be an American. At the end of 1943, General Dwight Eisenhower was appointed Supreme Commander of the Anglo-American invasion forces. The Combined Chiefs of Staff had designated OVERLORD and ANVIL as the "supreme operations for 1944" and instructed General Eisenhower: "You will enter the continent of Europe and, in conjunction with other Allied Nations, undertake operations aimed at the heart of Germany and the destruction of her armed forces." It was a formidable task that faced the new commander involving the assembly and deployment of the largest, and certainly the most complicated, military operation of all time. Moreover, it not only required the most intricate organization and administration on a multi-national basis, but it encompassed an extremely difficult amphibious landing against the strongest and most heavily fortified coast ever to be assaulted. It would be an offensive so immense that almost all of the British Isles would become one huge warehouse of men, supplies

and equipment. So much so, that it was said that "only the barrage ballons kept England from sinking."

Naturally, the Germans expected an invasion and, particularly, since the Allies had begun to talk openly about a Second Front in 1942. But they did not know where and when it would occur. Nonetheless, after two years of building their coastal defenses, German Commander-in-Chief-West Gerhard von Rundstedt described the "Atlantic Wall" as being only a propaganda creation by Adolf Hitler. The Germans had no idea about what to expect since their intelligence sources in Britain were practically non-existent and were unreliable throughout the war. In addition, the RAF had successfully prevented German reconnaissance flights over England. Although the Germans believed the invasion would occur in the Spring of 1944, they also realized it would undoubtedly determine the outcome of the war. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was given command of the defense of the most important sector from the Netherlands to the Loire River, and his first step was to recommend aggressive countermeasures against the invasion forces to include U-boat attacks on Allied ships in British harbors, the laying of controlled minefields, the concentration of V-1 attacks against the invasion staging areas, and aerial bombing on the assembly areas for embarkation. The Desert General fully expected the Allies to strike near the major ports of Le Havre and Cherbourg and not at the channel's narrowest point where the defenses could be expected to be strongest. But heavy defensive fortifications had not been constructed in the Normandy area since the German navy considered the beaches to be too rocky and shallow to be used for major landings. Rommel also requested additional troops for Normandy and for more 88-mm anti-aircraft batteries for use against tanks, but since they were controlled by the Luffwaffe and were needed to protect Germany, Marshal Herman Goering refused.

Meanwhile, Rommel immediately became involved in an operational conflict with Rundstedt on one hand, and with Hitler on the other, which proved to have a fatal impact on Germany's defense. While Rundstedt held overall command in the west, Hitler had given Rommel defensive command of the areas most likely to be attacked. That led Rommel to request control of all air, navy and land forces in his area so that he could coordinate an immediate and powerful counterattack as the only practical means of overcoming the Allied supremacy of air and naval power. But Hitler blundered badly by retaining control of all reserve

forces under his usual "divide and rule" policy which prevented both Rundstedt and Rommel from taking the only actions which could have defeated the Allied invasion of Normandy. It was a gross error which eliminated an orderly chain of command and assured that there would be a paralysis of decision and response in the most decisive battle between Germany and the Western powers in World War II. Rundstedt wanted to hold his reserve force of six panzer divisions in a central area near Paris where they could be used to counterattack wherever the enemy might attempt to land. Rommel, however, argued that the armored units should be held close behind the most likely invasion locations knowing that Allied air superiority would make it difficult to bring them up to the beachheads from assembly areas farther away. By experience he knew what would likely happen and said, "If we cannot get at the enemy immediately after he lands, we will never be able to make another move, because of his vastly superior forces...if we are not able to repulse the enemy at sea or throw him off the mainland in the first forty-eight hours, then the invasion will have succeeded, and the war will be lost for lack of a strategic reserve and the complete absence of our navy and Luftwaffe." Fortunately for the Allies, Rommel's advice was ignored, and noted American historian Stephen Ambrose strongly contends that the "World War I type static defense" that was imposed upon Rommel in Normandy was one of the German's principal mistakes of the war.

The total German strength on the Western Front consisted of sixty infantry divisions of limited combat capability defending 2,500 miles of coastline. They were poorly equipped, their ranks were composed mostly of older men and impressed foreign troops, and they were almost immobile without even adequate horse transport. The armored units were under full strength, their training was incomplete, and their effectiveness was considered by the Germans to be only about thirty percent of their 1941 standards. The German navy had never been considered to be adequate for its mission and the Luftwaffe, mainly occupied with the defense of Germany, was spread so thinly over Germany, in Russia and in the west, that it was largely incapable of effective defensive actions anywhere. When Rommel had complained to the High Command about serious deficiencies, he was told that Hitler's new "miracle weapons" of missiles and jet fighters would soon turn the struggle into victory for Germany.

In 1941 Adolf Hitler had proclaimed that the beaches of western Europe would be the main battleground and ordered the most likely points for invasion to be heavily fortified. But when Rommel took command in late 1943, he found that little had been done to fortify Normandy and only one and a half divisions of troops covered each thirty miles of coastline. He actively undertook substantial improvements adding new fortified strongpoints, the beaches and the sea lanes were mined, underwater obstacles and underwater mines were installed, harbors were obstructed, and deadly cross-firing weapons covered the beaches. Troops were billeted to seal off airborne landing areas from the beaches, anti-glider posts were set in open fields, large areas behind the beaches were flooded, and various deceptive measures were taken to make the enemy believe the defenses were impregnable. Rommel, knowing the war was lost and fearing the consequences of total surrender, knew the invasion could not be prevented and that, once the enemy got ashore, their superiority in numbers and material would overcome experience and professional skill which would inevitably open the way to Germany itself.

The self-confident Fuehrer, however, never had any doubt about what lay ahead. He saw the Allied attack on France as the opportunity to defeat his enemies in the west which would also be the turning point of his desperate struggle with the Soviets. He not only fully believed that his fortification of the French coastline would hold against the assault, he was also completely confident that with his new and revolutionary "secret weapons," he would throw the Allies back into the sea. Then he would be free in the west and could concentrate his forces for the complete defeat of the Soviets in the east. Once the Russians had been eliminated, the combined resources of the greatly expanded and replenished German Reich would overwhelm and defeat the no-longer superior forces of the democratic powers. Also, with the terrifying and powerful help of his new missiles and jet aircraft, England would be quickly conquered and America would be no match for a Germany that dominated all of Europe and a Japan which dominated all of Asia. His dream of world conquest was still very much alive in spite of repeated disasters on the Eastern Front—the war would soon be won, Germany's enemies would be destroyed, and "the Third Reich of a thousand years" would reign supreme!

With the appointment of Eisenhower as the Supreme Commander, the final planning and organization of OVERLORD got underway as soon as Ike arrived in England on January 15, 1944. The original COSSAC plan by Supreme Allied Headquarters assumed that the beaches of Normandy would permit only a three-division initial assault. But when General Montgomery was named commander of the invasion land forces, his wisely expanded assault force plan became the basis for the Allied operation. The first wave would include an initial assaulting force of five divisions backed-up by an inland airborne drop of three divisions and an immediate follow-up force of two additional divisions. Domination of the air and the seas were assumed as an essential requisite. For the total cross-channel operation the largest amphibious force in history consisting of 700 warships, 2,500 landing craft and 2,700 support vessels would be required. In addition, the ingenuous use of artificial harbors would permit the landing of the monumental logistics required until the harbor of Cherbourg could be captured and made operational. It was definitely the most extensive, diverse and complicated military operation in history. The power of the assault was revealed by the planned landing of the Americans consisting of 130,000 troops with a follow-up force of 1,200,000 men, 141,000 vehicles and tanks, and 3,500 guns by D-Day+90.

In the face of almost overwhelming difficulties, and in spite of the monumental scope of the required preparations, General Eisenhower organized an incredibly efficient Anglo-American team which in less than five months performed, according to British historian Max Hastings, "the greatest organizational achievement of the Second World War, a feat of staff-work that has dazzled history." For example, one infantry division coming to Britain from America required 270,000 tons of shipping and an armored division required forty ships to carry 386,000 tons. In addition, rail transportation, food and housing, supplies and equipment, vehicles and weapons, and training facilities had to be provided in England for the massive forces being assembled for OVERLORD. While Eisenhower had little command or combat experience, he proved to be an inspiring and remarkable leader who gained the love of his troops, as well as the high respect and warm regard of both British and American colleagues by his "skillful management of the complicated conflicts of multi-national relations and operations on a historic and victorious scale."

Incredibly, Adolf Hitler, with "the intuitive genius of a madman," had predicted the Allies would attempt to land at Normandy and repeatedly warned his generals that the area between Caen and Cherbourg was the most likely point for the attack. He concluded that the Allied concentration of troops and shipping in southwest England, their necessity for a large port, and the disastrous Allied practice assault at Slapton Sands (where inexcusably 639 US servicemen were killed in an attack by German E-boats from Cherbourg), indicated a Normandy attack. But a year earlier, the Operation FORTITUDE deception had begun with the staging of faked attack divisions, "improved" port facilities, artificial wireless traffic, false gliders and tanks along with heavy pre-invasion bombing of the Calais area. When George Patton was announced as the commander of the "Third Army" which was being staged across from Calais, and German communication intercepts confirmed that counter-measures were being taken in the Calais area, the Allies knew that the German Fifteenth Army had successfully been led to believe that the attack would come across the shortest and most direct route to the continent.

In fact, the Germans were so sure the attack would not take place elsewhere that they moved five divisions from Russia to the area north of the Seine river leaving Normandy defended mainly by static troops composed largely of overage Germans and conscripted foreign troops. However, in early May, the Allies were surprised to learn that Rommel had greatly increased his defense of Normandy by locating the 21st Panzer Division in the Caen-Falaise area, the Panzer Lehr Division near Chartres, and the 12th Armored SS Division at Lisieux. In addition, the 116th Panzer Division was being held near Paris and the 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division would be moved up to Normandy from Central France. Suddenly, as if by premonition, Hitler and Rommel had sensed the danger at Normandy and placed almost half of their western armor and six infantry divisions for fast deployment either to Normandy or the Calais area. Although the domination of Allied airpower could be expected to make a rapid enemy counterattack difficult, the planners of OVERLORD were shocked to learn that only three weeks before D-Day a fresh infantry division and a parachute regiment were moved from Germany to the areas where the American airborne forces would land. Furthermore, it would require at least seven weeks after D-day to get

thirty-seven divisions ashore against the some sixty divisions available to the Germans in France and the Lowlands.

It was apparent that the chance of success would be a great risk even for such a powerful amphibious assault. The organization and execution of the operation had become so large and complex, so much time would be required, so many had to know about it, and the probability was great that the Germans would learn when and where to expect it, that it was most unlikely that the attack could remain secret. It seemed to be an almost impossible risk for it was apparent that without surprise the brutally powerful Wehrmacht would destroy the invaders. Since the defenders could never be sure where the attack would occur, it would be relatively easy for the invaders to get ashore. But after the landing and before their offensive strength of men and weapons could be brought ashore—that was the most vulnerable stage. Then, once the Germans could assemble their forces for the inevitable counterattack, they would have an advantage of about ten divisions over the Allies which would last until about D+30—ample time to defeat the invading forces. That meant the possibility of achieving surprise for such a massive operation over such a long period of time was doubtful, indeed, and if FORTITUDE had not been such an unexpected success, and had Hitler not blundered so grossly over the use of the German forces in Normandy, the invasion of France would have been the most disastrous Allied calamity in Western Europe.

Not unexpectedly, heated disagreements arose in the planning of OVERLORD particularly regarding the all-important initial role of airpower to the success of the invasion. Both British and American airleaders opposed the interruption of the strategic bombing offensive against Germany, and fought against the use of strong aerial bombing as an essential requisite for the invasion. Without any question, had they prevented the successful interdiction of Normandy by air operations, with the effective resistance of the Germans in spite of Allied airpower, the result of the Battle of Normandy would have been greatly altered. However, after long and heavy arguments, Ike asserted his authority and the combined Allied airpower was ordered to heavily bomb transportation throughout Normandy and Northern France so as not to divulge the location of the assault. That enabled air strikes to successfully delay and cripple the enemy so that no effective counterattack was ever mounted. Equally important, it also forced the piecemeal commitment of Hitler's armor which was largely chewed up

successfully by much bravery and heavy loss by Montgomery's British and Canadian forces at Caen.

It had been obvious to Allied planning that air and naval bombardment could delay, not prevent, Germany's armor from powerful and possibly successful counterattacks against the beachheads. Little was known of the strength, training, equipment, composition or capability of the enemy's infantry divisions in the area nor was it known how much effect Germany's navy and air force would have upon the campaign. Neither did they know that Adolf Hitler had taken personal control of the armored reserve because he believed it might be needed at Calais or Normandy, or in both areas. Most helpfully for the Allies, since the Germans believed an amphibious attack would not be launched in bad weather, most of the top German commanders were away from their posts on an exercise. Thus the initial resistance by the Germans was spotty, their units were quickly overwhelmed and decimated by lack of organization and concentration, no effective counterattacks were mounted, and except for Omaha Beach, the British-American forces got ashore with little difficulty and light casualties. The planning of OVERLORD was brilliantly executed.

Rommel's basic defense plan, in the absence of tanks and heavy weapons, involved the containment of the attackers when they waded ashore long enough for close-supporting armor to move up and drive them back into the sea before they could prepare a defense against tanks. Had he been able to spot the 12th SS Panzers close behind the beaches, as he had requested, at least a large part of the Normandy landings could have been repulsed because much of the Allied air and naval bombardments were ineffective. But the Allies believed that with Germany's navy and air forces practically eliminated, the great advantage of surprise could be obtained, enemy defenses could be successfully breached, the assault should overrun German troops and positions near the beaches, Hitler's powerful armor could be prevented from making an effective counteroffensive, and the Anglo-American forces would fight their way ashore in large numbers to successfully launch the long-awaited Second Front against Hitler's Third Reich. Finally, the crucial and final phase of the war with Germany in the West would be set by what Winston Churchill described as "the most difficult and complicated operation that has ever taken place."

Fortunately for the Allies, the super-fighter P-51 Mustang became available just in time to prevent the Luftwaffe from establishing an effective defense over Normandy. In fact, the Allied domination became so complete during the invasion that swarms of Hurricanes, Spitfires and Mustangs, with their easily recognized black and white stripes, were constantly overhead. The defeat of the enemy air forces had been so complete, that most Americans behind the front in Normandy, including the author, never saw an enemy plane throughout the Battle of Normandy. On D-day, the most important day of the war in the West, the once-mighty German air force could fly a total of only 319 sorties. In the British sector as many as fifty German planes bombed the beachhead each night, but at nearby Omaha the GI's referred to nighttime aerial visits as being merely "Bedcheck Charlie." The fact was that the American and British airmen had accomplished such a spectacularly successful job in clearing the skies that most Allied soldiers in the European Theater would say that from D-Day until the end of the war, the planes of the once-mighty Luftwaffe were "rarely seen nor heard."

The plan for the aerial interdiction of Normandy was executed over a period of three months before the invasion with 66,000 tons of bombs dropped in France principally on roads, bridges and railways mainly to prevent the movement of German troops, armor and supplies into Normandy. Continuous air attacks were also made against coastal defenses, radar installations and airfields and, on the day before the assault, two of the heaviest coastal batteries were "obliterated." German General Hans Speidel said that by the third day after the invasion, the Allies had gained the initiative, largely due to the success of aerial interdiction. The final plan for an assault by six divisions to land on the beaches and three airborne divisions to drop behind enemy lines, backed up by an equal follow-up force, was greatly influenced by the expected status of the beaches, weather and tide, strength of the defenses, and the limited number of landing craft available. With ground forces under the overall command of General Montgomery, the initial wave of attack consisted of the US First Army under General Omar Bradley and the British Second Army under General Miles Dempsey. The landings were expected to achieve surprise and to generally proceed according to plan with initial objectives successfully attained. Through the important benefit of the secret code-breaking ULTRA intercepts, the Allies were fully informed about the status and difficulties of the enemy involving troops, weapons, ammunition, fuel and

supplies. Furthermore, the interdiction by Allied aircraft had been so incredibly successful that on D-Day it was reported that not a single one of the 14,600 Allied sorties over Normandy was shot down by the Luftwaffe.

Once the mighty invasion fleet of almost 6,000 ships had departed for France, General Eisenhower's decision against the advice to postpone the attack because of unfavorable weather turned out to be a highly important advantage for the Allies. As in Russia, "General Weather" had become one of the Allies' greatest assets. The Germans not only assumed there would be no attack in such weather, most of their top officers were away from their post. As history's largest seaborne military operation approached the French coast, shortly after midnight on June 6 more than 8,000 British and 16,000 American airborne troops began to land by parachute and glider in Normandy. The 6th British Airborne was dropped between the beaches and Caen to seize and hold bridges and to secure the left flank of the British beachheads. The US 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions were dropped on the Cotentin Peninsula to help secure the landings at Utah Beach. While the landings had met light opposition and all airborne missions were generally successful, substantial losses were sustained when the American drops were unexpectedly scattered over a large area partly flooded by the Germans. Although their losses were heavier than those of the British, they succeeded in substantially delaying resistance and created much enemy confusion. Many trooper casualties were caused by navigational errors, excessive reactions to flak by inexperienced American C-47 tow plane pilots, low clouds that resulted in faulty releases, and landing problems. Unfortunately, both British and American troops had difficulty forcing the transport pilots to comply with their drop missions. On the other hand, most glider pilots not only performed outstandingly, but many effectively served as infantry after landing. Without question, however, the execution of the airborne missions greatly aided the successful lodgment of the Allies, particularly, by creating surprise and confusion behind enemy lines.

The D-Day landing of the American 4th Infantry Division at Utah Beach achieved practically a complete surprise with little opposition. Most fortunately, navigational errors brought the initial assault waves onto a largely undefended sector. Also, the presence of large scattered airborne forces beyond the beachhead prevented the enemy from organizing an effective resistance. The invaders literally walked ashore and the beach exits were quickly seized which enabled a rapid

deployment inland where D-Day objectives were attained and the beachhead was quickly secured. Due largely to the effectiveness of the prior airborne operations, out of 23,000 men landed at Utah Beach on D-Day, incredibly, the death rate did not exceed 197!

The attack on Omaha Beach, however, almost became a complete disaster. The first of many gross blunders at Omaha occurred when it was decided that the assault would not be made under cover of darkness and that the naval and aerial bombing of enemy defenses would not begin until just before the landings in order to maintain the element of surprise. Then as the assault began, the bombing was targeted inland so as not to strike the invading forces which left most of the batteries and strong-points intact. Such ill-advised decisions enabled the enemy to withhold their fire thereby escaping most of the naval shelling, and as the waves of attackers struggled through the water to the beach, they were slaughtered by well-planned and murderous cross-fire. It was a critical error not to have begun the air and naval bombardments on the enemy positions well in advance of the assault, as the British had successfully done, and in accordance with generally established procedures for military operations. Historians have also criticized the lack of early bombardments by the navy and air force which eliminated shell and bomb craters on the beach at Omaha which would have provided non-existent shelter for many men who were killed and wounded. Although the writer worked on the beach for several days after coming ashore on D-Day+1, he cannot remember having seen any shell craters from either aerial or naval bombing between the water and the cliffs. To make matters worse, once the landings had begun, heavy layers of mist, smoke and dust prevented target accuracy by both the ships and planes.

Bad weather, unquestionably, caused many unforeseen problems for the Americans at Omaha but the US Navy was responsible for the most grievous initial faults. Fearing enemy fire from the beach, it required the initial assault landing craft to be launched twelve miles from shore in heavy seas so that many heavily laden craft crammed with seasick men were swamped and/or blown off course in high winds and heavy tides. Furthermore, the Navy almost totally wasted the invader's most important weapon in support of the attack by sending the "waterproofed" DD tanks into the water four miles at sea where twenty-seven out of thirty-two tanks were immediately swamped and sank. Only five tanks got

ashore at Omaha leaving the few soldiers who got across the beach with only small arms against enemy artillery, machine guns, and mortars. Nearly all of the Army's 105-mm guns and all but six of its tankdozers were lost before getting ashore. At least ten landing craft loaded with infantry foundered miles from the beach, and many more with their occupants were lost on underwater obstacles, by mines and by enemy fire. In another intelligence blunder, even if the initial vehicles had managed to get through the water and the heavy enemy crossfire, the strip of shingles on the beach between the water and the cliffs was found to be impassable for vehicles. Also, strong currents caused many assault craft to drift up to two miles east out of position where neither tanks nor engineer demolition teams were available, and the invaders became easy targets for the well-entrenched enemy. The resultant dispersal of force enabled the intense enemy fire to stop the first wave of attackers at the waterline and, as more troops were too hastily dumped into the water by rapidly withdrawing landing craft, units became badly mixed without order and leadership. As load after load of troops continued to force their way past the bodies lying in the water and all across the beach, they scrambled to reach the only possible cover available—the low shingle wall running along the beach. Since the situation appeared to be in great trouble and reinforcements were being backed up unloaded, about 9 A.M. General Omar Bradley seriously considered the necessity of canceling further landings at Omaha Beach.

In what became the most deadly amphibious beach assault of World War II, the first wave at Omaha involved the attack of the 16th Regimental Combat Team of the 1st Division which generally landed in the more protected area to the left of the beachhead near Colleville, and the 116th Regimental Combat Team of the 29th Division, with elements of the 5th Rangers, which had the great misfortune of incurring horrendous losses in a head-on attack opposite Vierville against the heaviest defenses at Omaha Beach. By 10 A.M. the second wave arrived with the 18th Infantry Regiment of the 1st Division landing near Colleville, and the 115th Infantry Regiment of the 29th Division landing near Vierville. But largely as a result of improvised leadership by small groups of courageous men who fought their way up the cliffs between strongpoints, by noon of D-Day there were four separate groups of invaders established on the bluffs over Omaha Beach where the immediate enemy defenses had been mostly

neutralized. Only then did it begin to appear that the deadly defense at Omaha had been broken. Gradually by nightfall, the 116th Infantry and the 5th Rangers had managed to establish a defensive perimeter around Vierville, the closest village to the beach. Meanwhile, to the east the 16th Infantry reinforced by the 18th and the 115th Infantry had pushed beyond Colleville and St. Laurent so that by night the two advancing forces were less than a mile apart above the beach. While only a small part of the scheduled 34,000 men and 3,300 vehicles had been landed at Omaha on D-Day, thankfully, the casualties of less than 3,000 men were considerably less than had been estimated. Nonetheless, it is certain that many more troops and weapons would have been landed, the enemy would have been overcome more quickly, and losses would have been considerably reduced had there been better intelligence, planning, training, decision-making and coordination by the US Army and the US Navy.

Consequently, before an advance could begin to move inland toward D-Day objectives, the assaulting forces had to struggle desperately for six hours of heavy fighting and high casualties. Then, only by the bravery and grievous sacrifice of numerous individual soldiers, ground began to be won against the stiffest resistance in all of Normandy in spite of inexcusable misjudgments and disastrous conditions. The failure of the commanders of the American navy, air force and amphibious forces to have effectively bombarded and reduced enemy fortified defenses, and to have placed ashore adequate forces and weapons to insure the success of the assault, resulted in the unnecessary heavy sacrifice of American troops in, undoubtedly, the most difficult amphibious struggle in American military history. As David Howarth would write about Omaha:

> Not one of these plans was fulfilled. The air bombardment missed its targets. The naval shelling had little apparent effect on the defenses. Most of the tanks were lost at sea or quickly destroyed on the beach, and the infantry was scattered and decimated. The demolition teams lost nearly half their number almost at once, and the remainder struggled to carry out their orders under conditions which were all but impossible. The beach became a chaos; the program of landing was abandoned.

While it had been known that most of Normandy was occupied by static enemy units containing many older Germans and involuntarily inducted foreign

soldiers, the Americans had critically erred by refusing to heed the warning of British intelligence about the suspected presence at Omaha Beach of the veteran 352nd Division recently transferred from the Soviet front. By the time its presence was confirmed at Omaha, Allied embarkation had begun and it was too late to get the word to the assault troops. Disastrously, the widely and wrongly dispersed initial attack waves found their landings resisted by eight battalions of tough battle-tested defenders instead of the expected four battalions of static troops. However, in spite of such brutal resistance and due to the courageous struggle and sacrifice of the valiant men of the initial assault forces throughout D-Day, some 55,000 Americans had been placed ashore on both beaches at a cost of fewer than 2,500 Allied lives. Fortunately, once the invasion was underway, the Germans made the fatal mistake of sending only one additional battalion to the Omaha area. Once there, only several counterattacks were made against the US Rangers who had assaulted a battery at Pointe du Hoc, only to find that its guns had been moved and were not in operation. Instead, had the German battalion been used to destroy the weak forces of the 1st and 29th divisions, which were barely hanging on at Omaha, Hitler and Rommel would likely have forced the enemy back into the sea on at least one beachhead.

Other major American misjudgments involved their frontal assaults on the beach exits at Omaha which were most heavily defended. If those assaults had been directed to land and advance between the beach exits where less resistance could be expected, then earlier penetrations would have permitted the destruction of fortified positions by flanking movements and rear attacks. The US command also erred greatly by having largely ignored the British suggestion that use be made of their specially equipped armored innovations, called "Hobart's funnies," particularly those that would have been invaluable for removing mines and obstacles. Without armor the American engineers had been prevented from clearing the water and the beach of obstacles which held up landings and added many casualties. Great delays occurred in getting men, weapons and supplies ashore as obstacles and mines had to be cleared by hand. If the underwater and beach obstacles, along with the mines, had been neutralized earlier, quicker advances inland would have followed which would have greatly reduced the wounded and loss of life.

If the Germans had counterattacked Omaha on either D-Day or D+1 when the frontline was still less than two miles from the shore, or if the 12th SS Panzers had been held in close reserve as Rommel had wanted, Hitler's threat to throw the enemy back into the sea might have become a reality. Instead, the invasion of Normandy caught the Germans entirely by surprise, the Atlantic Wall was generally quickly penetrated, and largely by means of the miraculous deception of FORTITUDE and the highly successful aerial interdiction of Normandy, the massive power of the panzers and the 88-mm guns of the Wehrmacht were unable to be effectively deployed. Just as Rommel predicted, being unable to counterattack forcefully within the critical first forty-eight hours after the invasion, Germany lost its last chance to win the most important battle in the West. As Churchill would say, "the most difficult and complicated operation that has ever taken place" was victorious on D-Day with total Allied casualties on all beaches of about 9,500, when the loss of many more thousands had been feared.

To the east of Omaha, the British 3rd Division landing on Sword beach at Ouistreham was a "remarkable success" with small losses, the Canadian 3rd Division suffered heavier losses at Juno beach near Courseulles when many of their tanks foundered, and the British 50th Division met substantial resistance on Gold beach near Arromanches. Altogether, however, the Commonwealth forces managed to land 84 of 129 tanks, many with Hobart's specialized attachments, and were able to get ashore in good order against much lighter enemy resistance than expected. Mine-flaying attachments on tanks helped greatly in getting off the beaches and, as Russell Weigley points out, the Americans made a gross mistake by refusing a British offer of similar tanks for Omaha beach. By 10:30 a.m. on D-Day, the British had landed the 6th Airborne Division and the Second Army with fifteen infantry battalions, seven Commando units, seven tank regiments, two engineer assault regiments, nine field artillery regiments and various supporting detachments. Overall, the British operation was called a highly efficient amphibious invasion which had strongly and successfully breached the German fortified defenses along the French coastline.

However, due to "excessive caution," poor handling of traffic and overcrowding of the beach, by noon landings on Sword Beach had become so entangled they had to be halted. Chester Wilmot, generally supportive of Montgomery's generalship, reported that the 3rd Division had become so delayed by the

"absence of drive" that its advance lost its momentum. On Juno beach, it was mid-afternoon before the Canadians could get organized while there had been practically no enemy between them and the vitally important objective of Caen. Furthermore, during the delay, and in spite of total Allied air domination, the 21st Panzer division, the only German armored division in the entire invasion area, was given time to successfully block the Canadians when they were within just three miles from Caen. Inexcusably, Bernard Montgomery's forces failed to seize the opportunity to occupy the most important Allied objective for D-Day which would not be conquered for many weeks following repeated attacks and substantial casualties. As British General Nigel Poett said, "At first light one of my companies could have taken Caen; in the afternoon it would have needed a whole battalion, and by night a division."

Since Allied invasion plans had recognized the strategic necessity to capture the area east of Caen for the breakout of British armor across favorable terrain, Montgomery's failure to quickly occupy the largely undefended Caen area resulted in a long and costly battle of attrition with disastrous consequences for the Normandy campaign. According to British historian Max Hastings, "the failure to gain Caen was a substantial strategic misfortune...There is overwhelming evidence that with greater drive and energy Second Army could have 'staked out claims' deeper inland on 6 June." Hastings also points out that the "loss of momentum" enabled the enemy to contain the beachhead and added, "The huge tactical advantage of surprise had already been lost." Disappointingly by nightfall, with only a small beachhead barely occupied at Omaha and the British failure to capture Caen, only Utah Beach had obtained its objectives largely as a consequence of the landings of the 82nd and 101st American airborne divisions. By D+1, the 12th SS Panzer Division arrived opposite the British forces and, after several attacks against the Canadian 3rd Division, it established a strong defensive line along the Caen-Bayeux highway which remained unbroken until long after D-Day.

Operation OVERLORD objectives had also called for the Americans to capture the Cotentin Peninsula and the major port of Cherbourg by D+20. During the first days of the invasion, while the Americans fought against the almost impenetrable hedgerow defenses and struggled to linkup the beachheads of Utah and Omaha at Carentan, the British and Canadians continued to be held up

before Caen where the Germans concentrated whatever armored strength they could assemble. On June 8 Rommel ordered a counterattack between Caen and Bayeux by the 21st Panzers, 12th SS Panzers and the Panzer Lehr divisions to prevent a link-up between the Anglo-American forces. But the 21st was already committed before Caen, Panzer Lehr was detained by Allied air attacks, and when the 12th SS reached the area, its fuel supply was exhausted. Although the highly effective interdiction bombing by Allied air forces had delayed the massing of German armor, the establishment of a powerful armored force was underway, and the Allied loss of momentum had enabled the Germans to assemble an effective defense to contain the beachheads.

Still the Allied invasion of Normandy was a spectacular triumph and the world knew that the days of Hitler's Nazi tyranny were numbered. Incredibly, during the first eleven days alone more than 81,000 American vehicles had been brought ashore across open beaches. By the end of June, more than a million Allied troops were landed in spite of the fact that slow progress against the enemy had caused a huge backup of material in the overcrowded beachheads. Nonetheless, the invaders had firmly established themselves ashore and it was apparent that the Germans would not be able to dislodge their strongly reinforced enemy. Meanwhile, the Americans continued to struggle against the fanatically defended hedgerows of Calvados and Britain's forces attempted to push ahead against the German armor which had been deployed at Caen to block Allied progress towards Paris. Although he was almost totally bogged-down for many weeks, General Montgomery repeatedly claimed that his operations had proceeded "according to plan" by successfully attracting and holding the German armor along the British front while the Americans could proceed against lighter opposition toward other objectives. Although some British commanders and historians have upheld Monty's claim, most American and many British observers contend that he repeatedly failed to fight his way out at Caen due to "slowness and over-caution," and they challenged the effectiveness of his troops as well as his leadership.

On the American front, the US V Corps made good progress southward after D+1, and on June 9 Montgomery ordered Bradley to advance on St. Lo and Caumont in support of a planned British 50th Division attack southwards toward Tilly-sur-Seulles. While Montgomery prepared his forces to advance,

enemy defenses were strengthened between the Orne river and Tilly, as well as against the US VII Corps in the bocage country to the west, and Montgomery's attack was postponed. The enemy was also in the process of bringing the 2nd SS Panzer Division, 17th SS Division, 77th Infantry Division and 3rd Parachute units into the battle from Brittany and southern France. But due to Allied fighter-bomber attacks, fuel shortages, and delays by the French Maquis, the 2nd SS, for example, required fourteen days to travel 450 miles and even longer for its tanks. At the same time US forces, with the help of bulldozing tanks, forced their way through strong hedgerow defenses and captured Caumont as the predominant terrain between Caen and St. Lo.

However, even with piecemeal reinforcements, the enemy had continued to hold off Montgomery's superior forces in the Caen area and the British invasion had become bogged down into stalemate. It was obvious that there would be no quick breakthrough and rush across France to the Rhine river as the invasion planners had hoped. But largely by his "conceit and bombast," Bernard Montgomery brought additional criticism upon himself for the general failure of the Allies to make greater progress in Normandy. When it became apparent that Caen could not be forced, even with the help of heavy bombardments by sea and air, and once the advantage of surprise had been lost, the Germans had successfully moved their understrength and weakened armored units into the line at Caen. As a consequence, on June 8 Montgomery wrote, "The Germans are doing everything they can to hold Caen. I have decided not to have a lot of casualties by butting up against the place; so I have ordered Second Army to keep up a good pressure at Caen, and to make its main effort towards Villers-Bocage and Evrecy, and thence S.E. towards Falaise." He also directed the US First Army to give first priority to an advance towards St. Lo.

In less than a week after the invasion Montgomery had received 326,000 men, 54,000 vehicles and tanks and 104,000 tons of supplies for a powerful mobile force which was obviously not intended to be just a holding force, as he would later claim. His decisive superiority in number of tanks over those of his enemy obviously recognized the opportunity and the responsibility for an offensive breakout towards Paris through the tank country beyond Caen. In fact, in planning the attack, the ego-centric Monty had intentionally placed his own forces nearest to Paris with the expectation of being the dramatic "liberator," an

honor which he sought but failed to obtain at both Messina and Rome. Furthermore, he continued to ignore a recognized principle of war—that the major advantage of tanks lies in their application of mobile aggressive power and not in static defensive operations. In the initial assault, Montgomery not only intended to drive beyond Caen but he had expected to drive his armored forces through to Villers-Bocage and Evrecy before the thrust of the surprise invasion could be stopped. But by D+2, even the badly-weakened enemy had successfully stopped his "dilatory offensive" assault before Caen and beyond Bayeux. By the evening of June 9, in the face of constant naval and air bombardments, Rommel had managed to concentrate his 21st, 12th SS and Lehr panzer divisions into a strong defense at Caen extending beyond Bayeux which would successfully repulse Montgomery for many weeks. While Monty's attacks on both sides of Caen made little progress, by a stroke of good luck on June 10 an RAF strike practically wiped out the headquarters of Panzer Group West that not only eliminated an armored attack intended to divide the invasion front, but also ended the German's last good chance for a successful counterattack.

On D+1 the British had obtained their most forward position when the 50th Division advanced through Bayeux and moved on towards Tilly-sur-Seulles. Recognizing the pressure of Allied air commanders to gain the vitally important airfield at nearby Carpiquet, as well as to breakout into the tank country east of Caen, Montgomery decided to use his renowned 8th Army from the North African campaign in an attempt to flank and get behind the German front. On June 12 after repeated delays, he launched the attack in the direction of Villers-Bocage by side-slipping the famous 7th Armored "Desert Rats" Division through the advanced position of the Americans on his right. The drive got as far as Villers-Bocage when 7th Armored was attacked by the 2nd Panzers and Panzer Lehr, but undercover of an artillery attack by the nearby US V Corps, it withdrew to avoid encirclement. Since Montgomery had directed V Corps to advance simultaneously, when the British forces withdrew, the American flank at Caumont was exposed to counterattacks by the Germans. Although American complaints had begun to circulate about Monty's delays and "foot-dragging," soon charges of "lack of drive" began to appear. British historians called the attack a "debacle" which had been a "wretched episode" for Montgomery, and it

was also charged that XXX Corps and 7th Armored had failed to meet their responsibilities.

Actually, what happened at Villers-Bocage would occur often with Monty's troops in Normandy as his tanks "outran their infantry" leaving the infantry exposed to the enemy. It was another of a number of defeats for the controversial Montgomery, none of which he ever admitted were losses. British Second Army Commander Miles Dempsey said that the "whole handling of the battle was a disgrace," not only because it continued to frustrate British efforts to occupy the plains beyond Caen so badly needed for tank and airfield operations, but it also enabled the Germans to close their last gap in a defensive line across the entire area at Caen that resulted in frustrating battles of attrition with extensive casualties that greatly demoralized the British forces.

Then suddenly, London was struck by the first V-1 flying bomb on June 12 and British morale, after having survived four years of terror during the "Blitz," received another horrible shock. That made it imperative that British forces at Caen should breakout without further delay to destroy the "buzz-bomb" sites along the coast of France. Indeed, it was fortunate that the development of the missiles had been delayed by the pre-invasion Allied bombing campaign. In fact, General Eisenhower believed that if the flying bombs had become operational six months earlier, the invasion would have been difficult and "perhaps impossible." Obviously, Hitler's "secret weapon" attacks placed great pressure upon Montgomery to clear the French coastal missile launching sites. Added to the existing criticism over the static front and the lack of Allied aggressiveness, now even the success of OVERLORD was being questioned. Soon substantial public doubt grew over whether the Allies could fight their way off the beaches, and while the primary objective of placing troops and supplies ashore had succeeded and the Second Front had at last become a reality, the breakout had failed and the Allied assault continued to remain frustrated. The objectives for the invasion had not been reached and Montgomery was widely attacked for not being able to punch his way out at Caen.

By this time, the Supreme Commander was "fed-up" with Monty's inability to get his troops moving and to mount a successful advance. He did what he could to pressure the British to keep the enemy "off-balance" to stop the invasion momentum from bogging down. But typically, Montgomery insisted on "tidying

up his administrative tail" by making sure he had an overwhelming abundance of men and weapons before taking the offensive. As Ike's impatience increased over the lack of progress by the British, Montgomery's next offensive operation was delayed by the great storm of June 19, which destroyed the "Mulberry" artificial harbor at Omaha and damaged the one at Arrowmanches. More than 300 ships were beached or damaged, the landing of all troops and supplies was stopped, and air operations had to be suspended for four days. Finally, Monty completed his plans for his third major attempt to take Caen by envelopment in an operation labeled EPSOM. After insisting that the Allied air forces bomb Caen with a massive attack over the objections of the air commanders, Montgomery launched 60,000 troops of the XXX Corps consisting of three of Britain's finest divisions equipped with 600 tanks and over 700 guns to attack west of Caen towards Evrecy. Boastfully, he sent Ike a firm commitment, "I will continue battling...until one of us cracks."

The trouble was, it was Montgomery who cracked. By June 25 he had again waited too long and as soon as the attack got across the Odon river, the enemy was given time to bring up the 9th and 10th SS Panzer divisions just arrived from the Soviet front. When they suddenly struck the 200 tanks of the British 11th Armored Division, Dempsey ordered a withdrawal and Montgomery called EPSOM off. Not surprisingly, Monty still claimed, "My general plan is maturing...according to plan." His VIII Corps had lost 4,020 men which critics blamed on "errors of tactics and judgment." Monty supporter David Irving said that Montgomery's plan to draw the enemy to the east while the Americans broke out in the west "in truth...was working," but Irving also admitted that Monty's mission from the beginning had been to advance beyond Caen to occupy the airfields as soon as possible—a responsibility which he failed to accomplish for eight weeks. Other countrymen contended that Montgomery and his generals had shown themselves to be "not only unimaginative, but also inadequate" to handle the situation in Normandy. Ike was particularly critical of the use of only 2-3 divisions for an attack instead of striking a major blow at the enemy. Montgomery, however, still refused to acknowledge any fault with his tactics and their consequences. He again defended his defeats by claiming that ground was not important since his only intention had been to keep the German armor pinned down on his front so that the Americans could breakout on his right.

That was too much for Ike and his colleagues at SHAEF, which included a number of ranking British officers, who had noticed that since the invasion Montgomery had changed his major objective from capturing Caen to the less aggressive role of holding the German armor on his front. They also did not like Monty's continued demands to use the Allied air forces as artillery before he would mount his piecemeal attacks. But Monty was not deterred. He continued to claim that he was satisfied with the situation and assured Ike there would be no stalemate. Yet in his directive of July 10, as another indication that he hoped all along to breakthrough at Caen, Montgomery ordered Bradley to assign Patton's tanks to the task of clearing Brittany after a breakout, obviously wishing to avoid the chance that Patton might make another dramatic and embarrassing end-run around him as in Sicily.

Even Irving admitted that the British commanders fully understood Montgomery's original strategy to involve a successful breakout beyond Caen and that it was intended to be a "strategic breakthrough." General Dempsey, however, called it a "tactical breakthrough" when he repeated his commander's concept just before he undertook an attack on July 7 following a demand for another massive air attack. It was suggested that perhaps, due to warnings of Britain's manpower shortage, Montgomery made the mistake of using tanks instead of infantry for the main assault. However, the enemy was alerted by the air bombardment so that the attack made little progress against the strongly defended rubble in the city. On July 10, over a month after D-Day, the Germans still held most of Caen.

While it was true that British attempts to break open the Caen stalemate against three enemy armored divisions had prevented the Germans from launching an effective counteroffensive during the Allies most vulnerable period of the campaign, it was completely false of Montgomery to claim, as he consistently did, that the battle had gone "according to plan." Nor can it be denied that the effective defensive tactics of the outnumbered and weakened Germans in the face of awesome air and naval attacks was due to the exceptional performance of their soldiers and the professional abilities of their commanders. Their accomplishments were even more remarkable in view of their limited resources, the disruptive interventions of the Nazi dictator, and the massive quantities of men, weapons and supplies available to their enemy. Furthermore, in view of the

reverses on the Soviet front and the relative ease with which the Allies had gotten ashore, every German soldier, other than the most fanatic Nazi, knew that Germany had lost the war. Yet, since they believed that 'unconditional surrender' meant the death and destruction of their homeland and the German people, they were convinced they had no choice but to fight to the death. Clearly, the almost total domination of Allied airpower was the major determinant factor in the Battle of Normandy. Without air supremacy, in spite of the Allies' overwhelming numerical and material advantages, due to the inexperience of their troops and the questionable leadership of many of their generals, there would have been insurmountable difficulties for the Anglo-American coalition.

In the earlier stages of the campaign when the British were being held up in their efforts to take or to get around Caen, the American advance continued to have difficult going in the impenetrable bocage. Stephen Ambrose believes that another major mistake of the Allies was their failure to be aware of, and to prepare for, the early breeching of the extremely dense hedgerows. This writer well recalls the complaints, frustrations and high losses of the GI's about fighting their way through the impossible hedgerows of Normandy. Although the Yank commanders continued to complain about British "sluggishness" at Caen, some of the American divisions performed particularly poorly against the hedgerows to the west. It should be noted, however, that for most of the British, Canadian and American units Normandy was their first experience with intensive warfare and, as could be expected, some units fought well and others suffered from lack of adequate training and experienced leadership. In many cases, while well armed and protected, Allied soldiers were being placed in battle against well-trained and experienced military forces equipped generally with superior weapons. It was not the soldiering so much that was being complained about as the generalship. An old military axiom holds that good command does not necessarily require the best soldiers and the best soldiers can rarely win with poor commanders.

It was not long before the press and the public, particularly in America, began to demand more progress in Normandy by Allied leadership. While Montgomery's front had been stalemated for weeks and the British had received far fewer casualties than the Americans, still Monty had succeeded in keeping most of the German armor tied-down which helped the Americans to make better progress with their primary objectives. With the exception of the Fifteenth

Army at Calais, the Germans had committed most of their reserves by moving many of their strongest and best divisions from southern France and the Lowlands to contain the beachheads. And it was true that most of their armored units were concentrated against the British at Caen so as to meet the danger of an armored Allied breakout for Paris. Thus, while the British were being held up at Caen, the Americans aggressively pressed on to accomplish a number of priority Allied objectives. Omaha Beach was linked-up with the British on June 8, Utah and Omaha beaches were joined up at Carentan on June 10 and, with the US VII Corps continuing to push westward, an all-out drive was launched to cut-off the Cotentin Peninsula to capture the vitally important and desperately needed port of Cherbourg.

The logistical accomplishments had been monumental. In less than a month more than one million men with 566,648 tons of supplies and 171,532 vehicles were landed in Normandy across open beaches in a remarkable achievement of Allied production and transportation. 41,000 prisoners were captured while 8,975 Allied soldiers had been killed. But the rapidly weakening Germans continued to fight desperately against overwhelming odds even though Hitler, as in Russia, refused to permit his generals to withdraw and reform in order to make stronger defenses elsewhere. Through ULTRA intercepts, the Allies knew that their combined ground forces and airpower were wearing down the German defense which they would inevitably overcome. However, from June 10 to July 24, the British front had barely moved past its D-Day objective in more than six weeks of costly struggle. In the meantime, while Monty was still stuck at Caen, by August 1 Bradley's US troops had completed the cut off of the Cotentin Penisula. Then, with the stimulation of having successfully captured Cherbourg on July 3, the US VIII Corps and a division from the VII Corps began their drive southwards. But fierce German resistance, the bocage terrain, and bad weather prevented air support and all progress bogged down. After it was determined that there had been a lack of command and aggressiveness, Bradley relieved both divisional and regimental commanders for incompetency. However, there were difficulties obtaining qualified and experienced replacements and temporarily little further progress was attained.

By that time Montgomery was embarrassed that his British forces had been stuck at Caen for over a month while the Americans had made much progress in

the west and had begun to advance southwards. On July 7 he decided to launch another offensive named CHARNWOOD. After a heavy raid by 450 bombers that devastated Caen and killed many French civilians, British and Canadian troops pushed off only to find that the bombing had not eliminated enemy resistance and, after one of the most fierce actions during the Normandy campaign, only the center of the city was reached where the attack "bogged-down." Again accusations were made that Montgomery had been "too slow" allowing the enemy to dig-in and bring up reserves. Although the British and Canadian troops had succeeded in forcing their way to Hill 112, as in EPSOM, when they were struck by another German counterattack and lost twenty-five per cent of their troops, they withdrew.

This time there was an outcry from the American press against Montgomery and even Churchill denounced him fearing that the static struggle might again consume Britain's youth as in World War I. Obviously, repeated attacks along the line were destroying much of Britain's limited manpower along with the superiority in number of tanks it needed to compete with heavier German armor. Still, Mongomery found himself pressed into mounting Operation GOODWOOD with a massive assault by 750 tanks and many armored vehicles in what was expected to be the most powerful and successful battle of the Normandy campaign. In fact, Eisenhower expected it to be the long-awaited breakout east of Caen. Furthermore, Monty even informed his Chief of the Imperial Staff Alan Brooke that the time had come for "a real showdown" and to drive an armored corps into the open country beyond Caen "to help the Americans in the west."

GOODWOOD had been planned to be an overwhelming surprise attack, but when it struck on July 18, the Germans were waiting. While the enemy was still dazed from the massive air attack, the strike intended to seize the Bourgebas Ridge then rush across the open tank country for Falaise. But even after an air raid with 1,500 heavy bombers dropping 7,700 tons of bombs, in addition to heavy artillery and navy shelling, Panzer Group West launched a ferocious counterattack which stopped the drive only three miles beyond Caen. Again the British made the crucial mistake of not using their infantry in close support of their armor, and while the enemy's line was crossed, it remained unbroken. Still as cocky as ever, Montgomery notified Eisenhower that he had caught the enemy "off-balance," and he was satisfied that his forces were "now operating in the open country to the

south and southwest of Caen," which was an outright lie. Quite the contrary, his attempt to use his infantry and artillery as a "battering-ram" to force a breakthrough for his armor had been another tragic and costly failure.

Clearly, Monty had made a serious mistake by making his most powerful attack as a frontal assault against the enemy's most strongly defended positions and the British air marshals were furious over what they considered to be the gross misuse of their airpower. Again Britain had failed to obtain success, and yet another loss brought increasingly strong criticism of Montgomery's command which was now being generally questioned. The United States media particularly condemned his leadership and it was charged that the Allies were stalling while the Soviets stood alone desperately fighting off the Nazis. Even Winston Churchill was so displeased with Monty's lack of progress that he referred to Montgomery when he informed Eisenhower that if the Supreme Commander was dissatisfied with an officer regardless of rank or nationality, he should be removed from command.

However, GOODWOOD did manage to reduce the enemy's resistance and prevented much of the German armor from being used against the forthcoming powerful American blow at St. Lo. As for Montgomery's leadership, the confidence of the British forces generally, and indeed by the Prime Minister himself, reached such low levels that, according to General Bradley, Ike would have fired the British top commander had it been politically possible. But at the time Bradley was under Montgomery's direct command and, being very much aware of his own difficulties against the bocage, he did not express his complaints about Monty until after the Normandy campaign.

During their second month in Normandy, the British continued their stalemated efforts at Caen while the Americans struggled against the difficult hedgerows of the bocage. The American push to the south continued to be held-up by the Germans defensive use of the hedgerows. With tanks largely incapable of forcing their way through the heavily overgrown barriers, hand-to-hand combat literally blocked the progress of US forces with heavy losses. In the Coutances-St. Lo-Caumont area alone, Bradley's VIII Corps suffered 10,000 casualties, and after twelve days of struggle, an advance of only seven miles was obtained. By July 11, after the US 9th and 30th Divisions had successfully turned back a counterattack by Panzer Lehr at St. Jean-de-Daye, the bocage

battle had become so intense that twenty percent of all American casualties resulted from "battle fatigue," and conditions at the front became so bad that many deserters were found in the rear areas. In six weeks of battle, the US 90th Division had to replace 150 per cent of its officers and over 100 per cent of its soldiers. In the US First Army alone there were 62,000 casualties including almost 11,000 dead. Meanwhile, pressures continued to grow in Britain and the United States to end the stalemate and to get the Allies moving towards Berlin. It soon became apparent to SHAEF, as well as to Montgomery and Bradley, that only an all-out offensive by the combined American-British forces could succeed in a breakout from the surrounded beachheads. So Ike encouraged Omar Bradley to take every advantage verging on "recklessness" to drive forward with everything available without concern about enemy counterattacks. Bradley's COBRA plan resulted which called for a massive airstrike followed by a concentrated assault by the US VII Corps west of St. Lo. The 9th and 30th Divisions would lead the attack backed up by the 1st Division and the 2nd Armored Division. Once a breakthrough could be obtained, a right turn was expected to flank five or six enemy divisions and, if successful, would be a breakout from the hated bocage. Following a delay by heavy rain, the assault began on July 24 with a heavy bombing through overcast skies by 1,600 aircraft which, inadvertently, killed 25 US soldiers and wounded 131more in the US 30th Division.

Next day in better weather, front-line troops withdrew while 1,800 fighter-bombers struck again, but unfortunately due to confused orders, 111 Americans including Lt. General Lesley McNair were killed and 490 were wounded. At first, the VII Corp attack proceeded cautiously against fierce resistance but soon found that the decimated German defenses could be turned and bypassed. Only eleven badly battered divisions including two armored divisions were left to oppose the American assault while fourteen enemy divisions, including six panzer divisions, had remained tied-down on the British front. Quickly, fifteen US divisions were committed to the battle and began to immediately pour through the disintegrating German forces. Pushing through the hedgerows behind tanks newly fitted with "rhino" claws on front, by nightfall 1st Division approached Marigny and the next day all of VII Corps had driven through and beyond the shattered forces of Panzer Lehr and 2nd SS Panzers. Bradley's offensive had caught the Germans

with six of their eight panzer divisions committed opposite Montgomery near Caen. First, the German lines were carpet-bombed by 2,246 aircraft concentrated in an area only five miles square. While two panzer divisions were drawn away from the Caen front, the Germans could only put together several understrength infantry divisions and two crippled armored divisions to oppose an American onslought of twenty-one divisions at full strength. As soon as the Yanks found that the opposition was weak and that they could get around its flanks, armored and motorized infantry units dashed forward for substantial gains. With the American advance deepening, when the remaining elements of the 2nd Panzers, 17th Panzers and the 353rd Infantry began to fight desperately against being cut-off, Bradley knew that the battle was being won.

At the same time, Ike pleaded with the Prime Minister to get Monty on his "bicycle" to get moving and Bradley requested Montgomery to keep the nine German divisions remaining on his front busy. So Monty, anxious to keep up with the American advances, agreed to maintain continuous attacks on the left. Saying that "everything will be thrown in," he ordered the British Second Army to go all-out for Vire. By then it was obvious that the Germans would soon be forced to withdraw and could be surrounded if the British moved forward to meet the expected envelopment. On August 7 the British began to attempt to prevent the escape of the enemy by sending the Canadian First Army forward behind massed artillery and tanks. But their progress was slow against the enemy's armor and they managed to advance only eight miles in three days, leaving a large gap through which the Wehrmacht was rapidly retreating. Unfortunately, Montgomery had sent the Canadians into battle without adequate reserves against the heaviest concentration of German armor, and after 1,500 casualties in one day, another British disaster occurred. While it was called another "tactical defeat" for Montgomery, it was an unmitigated disaster for the Battle of Normandy. In spite of 1,700 aerial sorties, the British attack failed to get beyond the Bourgebus Ridge and was called off. At least the costly Canadian assault had kept six of the eight German armored divisions in place near Caen which was a great help to the American offensive at St. Lo.

Then just at the critical moment, the US Third Army was activated on August 1 and George Patton's tanks immediately rushed forward between the Germans and the coast. Next, in a decision which has been strongly questioned, Bradley

ordered Patton to secure the breakthrough at Avranches, then to turn "westward" into Brittany so that the US 1st Army could turn eastwards toward Le Mans and Alencon to get behind the German armor facing the British front. General John Wood, commanding the US 4th Armored, believed that was a serious mistake since it was known that Brittany was lightly held by the enemy, and that Patton's forces should have been rushed instead towards the Seine to catch the Germans in full retreat. Others disagree, however, pointing out that Hitler had ordered the Germans to "stand and fight" and that an enemy counterattack was being prepared against the open American flank at Mortain.

Finally two months after D-Day, Hitler concluded there would be no invasion in the Calais area and released three infantry divisions, one panzer division and part of a parachute division to counterattack at Mortain to cut off the US breakthrough. Even though warned of the German attack by ULTRA, Eisenhower and Bradley took the bold risk of continuing to pour everything possible through the breakout to be supplied by air, if necessary. In a desperate effort to cut-off the American breakthrough that threatened Brittany, as well as the entrapment of the remnants of the Wehrmacht in Normandy, von Rundstedt's successor Gunther von Kluge massed the remaining elements of the 2nd SS, 17th SS and 116th Panzers with only 145 tanks and 32 self-propelled guns, and made a desperate attempt to cut off the twelve American divisions that had dashed through at Avranches. But when the German counterattack had driven to within nine miles of Avranches, it was almost totally destroyed by the largest fighter-bomber attack of the Normandy campaign. At the same time, Bradley saw his opportunity to force the German Seventh Army into a retreat from Mortain when it could be entrapped by a shorter envelopment between Patton's troops closing on Argentan and the British Second Army headed towards Falaise. After obtaining Montgomery's agreement, on August 8 Bradley turned the American XV Corps northward towards Argentan and Monty directed the Canadians and Poles to go all out for Falaise.

By this time the enemy was no longer capable of effective action, and with ULTRA's important help, plus the availability of new US divisions anxious to get into the fight, Eisenhower and Bradley knew they had the chance of a lifetime "to destroy an entire German army." Once Patton found little opposition beyond Avranches, Bradley ordered the Third Army to press eastward towards Alencon

and Argentan while Montgomery agreed to drive the British forces southward to "trap, destroy and capture the enemy." Chester Wilmot says that the general opinion in the Wehrmacht was that its enemy never exploited its breakthroughs with pursuit and that the fighting morale of the British was poor, nervous in combat, but good in offensive spirit. And, before the breakthrough, they considered the Americans to be even less aggressive and less formidable. Preceded by another heavy bombing by massed fighter-bombers, Montgomery launched Operation TOTALIZE and directed his II Canadian Corps to drive southward to breakout through the Bourguebus Ridge towards Falaise, in order that British and American forces could catch the enemy in a "double envelopment left hook," before they could breakout towards Paris. However, even after the 9th and 1st SS Panzers had been switched from the British front to the unsuccessful attack at Mortain, and with the help of more heavy raids by British and American bombers, the drive by the 3rd Canadian Division and Polish armor was persistently held up by delays and had slowed down.

Once the British attack had started, the German 89th Division, 12th SS Panzers and the 101st Heavy Tank Battalion held off the Canadians and Poles in heavy fighting until the German's strength was reduced to only thirty-five tanks. The British forces, however, still with some 700 tanks, decided they could not get through to Falaise without a new assault by another heavy bomber raid. Tragically again, the British forces lost the opportunity to gain the success their sacrificial efforts deserved. As the US XV Corps approached Argentan, which was in the British Sector, Montgomery was asked to change the boundary so that the American advance might continue. He refused, however, presumably expecting that the Canadians would give him a long sought victory with a successful advance across relatively easier terrain towards Argentan. But Patton was doubtful and facetiously asked Bradley if he could continue north and "drive the British into the sea for another Dunkirk?" The American VII Corps was convinced they could take Falaise and Argentan, close the gap and 'do the job' before the British started to move. But Bradley made the error of believing that most of the Germans had already gotten through the gap and so he held the Americans back for fear of a collision between the British and Patton's forces. The Americans actually waited for the British at Argentan for five days knowing that a large part of the German forces were escaping from the Falaise-Argentan pocket. Again it

was the egotistical pride of the overall commander Montgomery who failed to permit the Americans to close the gap, or to insure that the British forces would close the gap, that prevented the total destruction of the German Army in Normandy and tragically determined that the consequences of the war would be unnecessarily extended.

In the process Montgomery had committed one of his most serious and controversial blunders by not committing fully Second Army's 7th Armored, which had a relatively easy time of it in secondary actions, to reinforce the inexperienced Canadian 4th Armored and Polish First Armored in their "bogged-down" drive to Falaise. Had he done so, he would have had the strength to force his way over the few remaining miles to meet the waiting Americans to close the gap between Falaise and Argentan. Then the destruction or capture of almost all of Germany's Normandy forces would have surely resulted. By August 12, it was apparent to the Americans that the British advance had, once again, fallen into the "legendary Montgomery vice of overcaution." Having failed to give the Canadians the necessary reinforcements for a final and likely successful push to Falaise, their armored divisions were also pulled out of action which prevented the British from fulfilling their responsibility for closing the gap and permitted more than a third of the Seventh Army to escape.

If the pocket had been closed by August 15-16 at least nine of the eleven panzer divisions, which would later inflict such heavy casualties upon the Allies, would have been destroyed or captured. Even Chester Wilmot found that Monty's drive from the north "was not pressed with sufficient speed and strength," and that although generous reserves were available, he failed to reinforce Simonds' Canadians. Such serious delays in the attack lost decisive "opportunities of exploitation" which would have saved the British Forces from much suffering and casualties later. For thirteen days two weak and badly "battered" German divisions and "a handful of tanks" had kept the Canadians and Poles from closing a gap of only thirty miles separating the Allied forces. It was August 20th, five days later, before the British finally managed to link up with the Americans at Chambois.

Even though Montgomery had banned Allied bombing of the pocket in the final stage for fear that Allied troops might be struck, the Germans lost at least 10,000 killed and 50,000 prisoners. But the failure to close the "killing grounds"

earlier had permitted from 20,000 to 40,000 enemy troops to escape including most of the officers who would continue to fight to save Germany. It was the most unjustified and embarrassing performance for the British forces during the entire Western offensives. British historian Richard Lamb called it Montgomery's "biggest error of generalship," and the official Canadian historian states, "A German force far smaller than our own...was able to slow our advance to the point where considerable German forces made their escape." Indisputably, it was the most controversial operational blunder during the Normandy campaign in that it greatly increased the strong resistance and substantial Allied losses that followed at the Scheldt, at Arnhem, in the Ardennes, before the Rhine and up to the final surrender.

Of course, by the end of the Normandy campaign practically every German soldier knew the war was lost. The Soviets were inside Poland after twenty-eight German divisions had been destroyed in five weeks. Rome had been liberated and in France the Wehrmacht was in full flight towards Germany after having been slaughtered in Normandy. The Allied superiority in men and weapons had been so overwhelming that, for the first time, Hitler's vaunted Wehrmacht was rapidly withdrawing in both the east and the west. Nonetheless, the German soldier continued to put up a powerful and fanatic resistance where possible. While there was simply no hope for a military victory, the German soldier preferred death to the horror of the occupation and destruction of their homeland by the Allies and their Bolshevik Soviet partners. Then, after the attempt on Hitler's life had failed on July 20, the German military suffered disastrous consequences. It had always been distrusted by the Fuehrer and following the assassination conspiracy by the officer corps, he ceased conferring with anyone. As the losses on both fronts had greatly escalated, the morale of the military had rapidly declined.

Critics in Britain said that Montgomery and his generals had been "not only unimaginative, but also inadequate" to handle the situation in Normandy. Captured Germans documents included several derogatory remarks about British tactics saying that, "A successful break in by the enemy is almost never exploited to pursuit," and that "Whenever the enemy infantry is energetically engaged they mostly retreat or surrender." Ike specifically criticized Monty for having used insufficiently powerful attacks against the enemy at Falaise instead of striking a major blow at such a critical opportunity. Although Montgomery was

under instructions from his government to conserve Britain's rapidly dwindling manpower, it is well-proven that inadequately forceful attacks with unaggressive leadership neither saves lives nor wins battles. On the other hand, Montgomery could claim to have kept 725 German tanks on his front which left only 140 to oppose the Americans. It had been obvious from the beginning that the Germans would concentrate their tanks on the British front, rather than in the bocage of the American front, to prevent an Allied breakout across the more favorable terrain towards Paris and Germany. But Monty repeatedly attempted to screen his failures to accomplish his major mission which was to defeat the German forces that denied Allied access to Paris across the Caen plain.

Obviously, the purpose of any major military offensive is to attack the enemy and to defeat him in battle, otherwise, it is nothing more than a holding action. In Normandy, when an overwhelming superiority of men, weapons and supplies have been provided the attacking force, in addition to the total domination of the area by naval and aerial bombardment, the continuation of a stalemated front lasting almost sixty days cannot be justified under any circumstances. Furthermore, there is no evidence that any of Monty's efforts were ever intended to be mere holding actions, and by having permitted a stalemate to develop, in spite of vastly superior air, naval, manpower and tank resources, certainly verifies the fact that Montgomery's blunders lost the Battle of Caen and critically delayed the accomplishment of Allied objectives for the Battle of Normandy.

In planning the invasion, the main concern of the Allies had been to avoid "at all costs" the possibility that the attack might "bog down" into the stalemated consequences of trench warfare. Thus largely due to the static front at Caen, public doubt had arisen as to whether the Allies could fight their way out of the bridgehead, and while the primary objective of placing troops and supplies ashore had succeeded and the Second Front had become a reality, all efforts to break through the encirclement had failed. By D+50, when the Allies had merely reached their D+5 objectives, Montgomery was widely attacked for his failure to fight his way out at Caen. Ike actually attempted to defend Montgomery, saying that the enemy had used "great force" to defend "the importance of Caen," and that the area was so strongly defended that the cost to take it would be "prohibitive." General Omar Bradley, obviously aware that the American progress against the hedgerows had also temporarily bogged down, came to Monty's defense. But

it was apparent that the American lack of progress resulted largely from their initial lack of experience and the difficulty of the German hedgerow tactics, not from lack of initiative and poor generalship which continued to be Monty's problem.

The Germans had persisted in standing and fighting desperately against hopeless odds on all fronts as Hitler blundered, as in Russia, by refusing to permit his generals to withdraw their limited and rapidly dwindling resources to build stronger defensive positions behind the Seine river. Massive and constant air attacks had prevented them from mounting an effective counteroffensive since the invasion and the constant pressure of Allied aggressions was rapidly eliminating all organized resistance. In less than a month, more than one million men in thirteen American, eleven British and one Canadian divisions with 566,648 tons of supplies and 171,532 vehicles, had been placed safely ashore. It was described as a monumental accomplishment of multi-national planning, production and transportation.

The heavily disputed invasion of Southern France, designated as Operation DRAGOON, occurred on August 15 after being postponed until after the Normandy assault due to the shortage of landing craft. The US Seventh Army, composed of three US divisions from Italy backed up by the French Army B, followed an airborne landing with little opposition since most of the German units had been moved to Normandy. It had been a major issue in the Second Front argument as Winston Churchill and his British colleagues had strongly opposed the American insistence upon DRAGOON. Wishing to get away from the Prime Minister's Mediterranean "distractions," the operation was conceived by the Americans to keep enemy units in Southern France from being moved up to Normandy, as well as to gain the port of Marseilles to relieve critical supply shortages. However, the British had insisted that the men and supplies were more urgently needed in the slow and costly struggle against the Germans in Italy. Instead, Churchill had repeatedly argued that the Allies would end the war quicker and with less losses by driving up from Italy into Southern Europe. As it turned out, the British were right about DRAGOON because it had little influence upon the battle of Normandy and, as it turned out, little use was made of Marseilles as a port.

While the Americans had been correct by insisting on the highest priority for the Normandy invasion, the Prime Minister was also correct in that additional

resources could have prevented the Italian campaign from continuing on to the end of the war. It should have been evident that within the five weeks after the cross-channel attack, most of the German units in southern France would already have been moved to Normandy. DRAGOON clearly was a major American blunder which increased casualties and delayed the surrender of the German forces in Italy. Also, General Bradley's decision to turn George Patton westward into Brittany had been unfairly questioned. The record shows that Bradley was directed to send his forces into Brittany by Montgomery who wanted to avoid another end run by Patton as in Sicily. Critics argue that if the Americans had been able to ignore the lightly held Brittany area and rushed ahead for the Seine, the Germans would have been caught in full retreat and most of them would have been destroyed or captured. Other historians disagree, pointing out that von Kluge's forces were under Hitler's orders to "stand and fight" and, at the time, were preparing to counterattack at Mortain against the open American flank. As it turned out, the counterattacking 2nd, 1st SS and 2nd SS Panzers jointly had only 140 tanks and 32 self-propelled guns after the largest fighter-bomber attack of the Normandy campaign. Actually, Bradley had welcomed the chance for his new and strong Third Army to crush the remaining German opposition.

Without question, COBRA demonstrated the most brilliant generalship of the Allied war in the west. It had enabled the Americans to breakout completely with almost unopposed armored thrusts to quickly bring an end to a long, bitter and costly campaign. Although battles almost never develop as planned, the breakout could not have occurred without the invaluable and courageous assaults by the British Second Army which had attracted, retained, and ultimately wore-down the bulk of the German armor concentrated at Caen. Indisputably, the victory of the Battle of Normandy sealed the fate of Germany in World War II and it ranks with the Battle of Stalingrad as a major turning point in the total defeat of the previously victorious forces of Nazi Germany. The Normandy campaign also dramatically initiated the liberation of Western Europe and as the Allies pursued the Germans in their flight towards the borders of Germany, the liberation of Paris occurred on August 25 (D+80). Described as being first conceived amidst substantial disagreement between the American-British partners, painfully developed over a period of two and a half years, masterfully organized and

brilliantly managed, the OVERLORD invasion was clearly the most complicated and the most brilliantly executed amphibious military operation in history.

Generally, however, the Battle of Normandy was judged to have had a "disappointing beginning" and "a satisfactory result." In consideration of the vast Allied superiority in manpower, weapons, logistical support, and their almost total domination of the sea and the skies, the initial stages of the occupation of Northern France failed to bring the success that was expected. The isolated and weakened remnants of the Wehrmacht in Normandy had not only successfully held off the powerful enemy with little or no air support, but also managed to effectively impose a stalemate while inflicting heavy casualties upon its opponents. "Muddled" and over-cautious Allied command had enabled the desperately struggling Germans to build and maintain a highly effective defense at Caen which largely immobilized the eastern half of the Allied lines and accomplished the initial German objective of preventing an Allied breakout across France towards Paris and the Reich. As British Major J. J. How contends, "Had the British reinforced success with the same energy and speed the Germans had moved to forestall disaster there would have been a different end." If it had not been for the "methodical Allied tactics" during the attempt to break-out of the beachhead, and had more aggressive initiatives been used, Rommel's Chief of Staff Hans Speidel believed that the war could have been over by October 1944. As a well-established military adage goes, "inadequately forceful attacks with unaggressive leadership neither saves lives nor wins battles."

By the time Allied forces had crossed France and reached the border of Germany in September 1944, the powerful offensive had literally "run out of gas" and came to a halt at or near the Siegfried Line. Forty German divisions had been destroyed, 209,672 casualties had been inflicted, about 200,000 prisoners were taken, and 1,500 tanks, 3,500 guns and 20,000 vehicles were destroyed leaving the Third Reich almost undefended. In spite of almost total air superiority, the 210,000 Allied casualties with almost 37,000 dead greatly exceeded expectations. It is also surprising to note that after Montgomery's many static actions before Caen, and with American forces in Normandy about equal to British forces until the middle of July, according to Carlo D'Este, by August 29 American troop casualties of 125,847 substantially exceeded British casualties of 83,045. The Battle of Normandy was not only the most important military event

in the west, but it may also have been the costliest battle of the war for Germany. While Russian losses at Stalingrad are unknown, Axis forces at the beginning of the battle consisted of twenty German and two Rumanian divisions totaling about 300,000 men with 92,000 Germans remaining at the surrender. It appears that the total number of Germans lost at Stalingrad did not exceed the over 400,000 killed, wounded and captured during the Normandy campaign.

In spite of the fact that Germany had suffered crippling reverses in the East and that by 1943 Germany's political leadership and military strength had begun to rapidly disintegrate, Adolf Hitler had convinced his countrymen that his new "wonder weapons" would bring a victory in the west which would then enable them to concentrate adequate forces in the east to defeat Russia. But after the Battle of Normandy, every German other than the most fanatic Nazi knew the war was lost. A new Russian summer offensive had been launched on June 23 and the Soviets were soon deep inside Poland. In Italy Allied forces continued to attack northwards against a strong but steadily withdrawing enemy. And in the west, the remnants of Germany's badly beaten and decimated retreating forces desperately attempted to form a line of defense across Holland and along Germany's borders in a last frantic stand to defend the Fatherland.

Inevitably, the Allied massive superiority in men and weapons had worn down Germany's greatly reduced forces in Normandy and Hitler's fanatic policy to "stand and fight" had prevented any chance of orderly withdrawals and regroupings for defense and counterattack. For the Germans, all hope was gone, and it was obvious that only the overthrow of Hitler and a new government could negotiate a cessation of hostilities which could save Germany from total destruction and enemy occupation. But instead of opposition or revolt against the insanity of Adolf Hitler, as Richard Lamb writes, "their will to resist was stiffened by the Allied policies of unconditional surrender." Every German had been led to believe that "unconditional surrender" meant the destruction of the German people and their homeland by the Allies in partnership with Soviet Communism. They believed that fighting to the death was preferable to "the rape and horror" that would come with occupation by "the atheistic Communist hordes" from the East. For them, there was no alternative but to continue the hopeless struggle until Germany's fatal "Gottendammerung." To make things worse, the abortive attempt on Adolf Hitler's life on July 20 and the military disasters in Russia and

France, had shattered the morale of the German people who finally realized they were hopelessly caught between the nightmare horror of the on-rushing enemies from both the east and the west. The errors, mistakes and blunders of the Battle of Normandy were many and, while the consequences of change can only be speculated upon, the likely result of other courses of action can be reasonably and sometimes accurately projected.

The Allies first major mistake regarding the Battle of Normandy arose from Franklin Roosevelt's arbitrary decision to conduct the war on a military basis without appropriate consideration of the political interests of the United States and the free world. That was, in fact, the basis for the lengthy controversy over whether the major assault against Germany by the Allies should be made in Northern France or from the base already established in North Africa. The fact that the Normandy invasion succeeded outweighs the uncertainty of an offensive into the Balkans, as advocated by the British. Yet, aside from actually losing the war, the argument can be made that the political consequences of Allied policies could not have had a more disastrous result for the purposes for which World War II was fought—the preservation and advancement of democratic government and human freedom.

Although the Battle of Normandy was won the question remains as to whether the decision to invade Normandy provided the best benefit to the long term interests of the democratic West? Since the Allied-Soviet joint prosecution of the war resulted in the Soviet domination of Central Europe, and led to the waste of untold human lives and resources in the Cold War, would not almost any other reasonable course have ended the war sooner with far less disastrous consequences? Clearly, the actual Normandy campaign failed to accomplish its initial objectives, and while it eventually resulted in the defeat of the German forces in the west from which they never recovered, many inexcusable mistakes and blunders were committed which delayed the end of the war, caused unnecessary casualties and suffering, and resulted in the postwar loss of democracy for hundreds of millions of people. Many questions remain unanswered. Would Germany have been forced out of the war sooner had the Allies attacked earlier across the channel or more directly through Southeastern Europe? Would the Alps have been an insurmountable barrier? How certain is it that the Alps would have been less heavily defended than the Atlantic Wall? Could substantial help

have been realized from partisan troops in the Balkans? Why were the resources used for the TORCH landings in North Africa in 1942, or for the assaults on Sicily and Italy, instead of for a cross-channel attack towards Berlin when the "Atlantic Wall" existed in name only? The evidence indicates it is most probable that with an earlier cross-channel attack the war would have been won a year or more earlier, a democratic Germany would have remained free and intact, and the armed confrontation of the super-powers would not have victimized much of the freedom and progress of the world for almost fifty years thereafter.

The American insistence on a massive frontal attack across the English Channel, as opposed to the British interest in numerous peripheral offensives, remained a great controversy for several years. At times it threatened to tear apart the "Grand Alliance" with unnecessary and disruptive argument regarding both the planning and the execution of the invasion operation. The American plan of attack was mainly based on military and not political considerations, like most American decisions throughout the war. The British, however, were more aware that wars are fought for political, as well as military purposes and it is probable that had the same force been applied for an Allied advance through the Balkans, while posing the continued threat of an invasion through France to keep German units tied down in the west, the operation could have successfully led to an early Allied occupation of Germany and much of Central Europe. Then a surrender by Germany would have avoided the Soviet occupation of all of East Europe and world history could have been greatly changed. Churchill and his advisors disagreed in principle with Roosevelt's "all or nothing" policy, and on various other issues, but they felt compelled to go along with their American partners upon whom they were almost totally dependent for any realistic hope of saving Britain from conquest by the Nazis. FDR's "victory only" policy bound the Allies not to enter into any surrender negotiations with its enemies or any political settlements without the agreement and participation of the Soviet Union.

Franklin Roosevelt obviously committed the most grievous of all blunders of World War II by granting the ruthless Soviet dictator a veto power over Anglo-American policy in the naive and totally unrealistic expectation that the Soviet Union would support democratic principles and actions in the development of postwar international law and order. Inexplicably, such a policy was adopted at a time when the world was fully aware that the Soviet Union was dominated by a

violent and brutal dictatorship which was dedicated to the worldwide revolutionary overthrow of democratic government and individual freedom. Again, the policy so flagrantly violated the practice of common sense in determining what was in the best interest of freedom and democracy that the only logical explanation is that Franklin Roosevelt was improperly influenced by his unrealistically idealistic, if not treacherous, advisors.

In battle, victory or defeat can be determined by the side that makes the fewest mistakes as well as by the side that has the heaviest battalions. In the considered judgment of this author, the greatest blunder of the Allied invasion of Western Europe was the appointment of Bernard Montgomery as commander of all ground forces in Normandy. His pre-invasion concept of the battle, consistent with his ego, assigned to himself the most likely opportunity with the greatest resources and the heaviest armor for a quick breakout across the Caen plain for a dramatic capture of Paris. Consequently, his flawed decisions and unsuccessful offensive operations led to critical damage to the Allied cause as he repeatedly failed to meet his responsibility to provide the aggressive and effective leadership against inferior forces which would have avoided the stalemate in Normandy. Specifically, he failed to shorten the breakout period, to substantially reduce Allied losses, to conserve manpower and supplies, to hasten the destruction of the German resistance, and to end the war sooner.

General Eisenhower and his staff at SHAEF, being aware of Montgomery's performance in Sicily and Italy, had preferred General Harold Alexander to command the invasion ground forces. They considered the appointment of the controversial and unpopular Montgomery to command the most critical Allied operation of the war in Europe to have been a very serious mistake. Many British and American officers believed that he had neither the skill nor the temperament for such a vitally important responsibility. They also knew that he intensely disliked the American commanders and resented them for opposing his appointment as Supreme Commander. He actually despised Eisenhower as not being qualified for his position. Most of those who knew him outside of his personal staff considered Monty's ego to have been uncontrollable, that his ambitions were disruptive, his claims for success were untrue, and that his continued leadership was questionable. Moreover, his critics proved to be right. Until the end of the war, he repeatedly attempted to takeover the command of both British and

American troops, he was unbearably conceited, he was often rude and insulting, and he caused constant trouble and distraction for Eisenhower and the American-British staff at Supreme Headquarters.

Originally, Churchill and Roosevelt had agreed at the Quebec Quadrant Conference in August 1943 that since OVERLORD initially would consist of equal numbers of British and American troops, that British General Alan Brooke would be the Supreme Commander. But once the huge Allied buildup in Britain got underway with predominantly American troops and equipment, Churchill said, "I myself took the initiative of proposing to the President that an American commander should be appointed for the expedition to France" for which the President had been "gratified." Brooke admits that he was tremendously disappointed and he apparently blamed it on the Americans for it was he, along with British Secretary of War P.J. Grigg, who consistently encouraged Montgomery in most of his controversial attitudes and actions. They also actively supported Monty's aggressive efforts to direct and regain command of the Allied ground forces that became so disruptive, and they were behind much of the distraction and disharmony in the conduct of coalition warfare during the closing months of the war. Realistically, it was politically naive and totally unrealistic for Brooke, Grigg and Montgomery to believe that there was any chance that Britain, with only one British Army and one Canadian Army in Europe, should takeover command of an Allied force that included five American Armies and had provided the overwhelming majority of Allied arms and supplies. Moreover, most of the American, and many of the British officers, knew that Monty's leadership of the British forces had been badly flawed, unsuccessful and costly to the common cause.

The claim that Monty's forces had succeeded in holding actions that resulted in the "gradual wearing down" of the German armored defenses at Caen which made possible the spectacular American breakout at St. Lo certainly cannot be denied. The struggle of the British and Canadian forces against the concentrated might of the panzers at Caen was courageous and persistent. However, the self-serving assertion by Montgomery that there was any similarity between his intentions and his results at Caen, as well as his repeated claims that everything had gone "according to plan," has been soundly refuted by his eminent countrymen such as Tedder, Morgan, Barnett, Hastings, Lamb and Keegan, as well as by Eisenhower, Bradley, Ambrose and D'Este among the prominent Americans.

While British authors such as Wilmot, Lewin and Hamilton contend that Montgomery was one of Britain's greatest generals and was a master of the "set-piece" action, other British analysts, and most of the Americans, hold that he consistently refused to attack before a vast and overwhelming superiority of force had been assembled, and even then, his persistent "lack of dash" and "over-caution" caused him to get "bogged down" so that the enemy had time to dig-in and to successfully repel his attacks. Finally, they assert that since the Battle of Alamein had been won by General Claude Auchinleck before Montgomery's arrival in North Africa, it is a fact that Monty never won a single battle in World War II.

In Normandy, as in Africa, the British continued to break-off offensive actions at dark to have tea and retire for the night when aggressive pursuit would have won the fight. Monty also ignored what the Russians and the Americans had learned from the Germans, that it was essential for infantry to support armor for offensive success. In Normandy, as much as any other factor, that was Montgomery's most costly tactical deficiency. If Montgomery's claims of intentional holding actions were true, the OVERLORD plan would have had to remove any intention for a breakout by the British 2nd Army. And why had Monty been allocated so many tanks? The fact is that any reasonable expectation of an armored supported breakout, which Ike and everyone else assumed there would be, would have had to be across the plains from Monty's front. Everyone knew that the bocage was not suitable for mobile tank operations, so no one expected an American breakout through the dense hedgerows. In fact, the NEPTUNE plan of February 1, 1944, directing Second Army to take the airfields beyond Caen, and to protect the flank of First Army's concentration on the capture of Cherbourg, remained in effect and showed that Montgomery had placed the phase line at Alencon on D+25. Also, Russell Weigley points out that Monty was given three armored divisions for the initial assault, compared to two for the Americans, and it was known that it would be late July before the US forces would be equipped with another strong tank force. Furthermore, the original COSSAC plan prepared by the British, called for a major offensive through Caen to secure the open country and airfields beyond the city since COSSAC knew the bocage terrain was not suitable for an armored breakout.

However, to the day he died Montgomery claimed it had been his plan from the beginning to merely threaten a breakout on the left front to draw enemy

armored reserves to his sector so that the Americans could breakout to the west, and that, since the campaign had gone "exactly according to plan," he had masterminded the brilliant Allied victory in Normandy. That claim, of course, was totally false. It was obvious to the initial planners of OVERLORD that since the Germans could not effectively deploy their armor in the bocage hedgerow country, their panzers would be concentrated on the plains south of Caen to block Allied access to Paris and the German Ruhr. Indeed, Montgomery's report on June 13 that he had 1,540 tanks (of which two-thirds were US Shermans), while there were only 750 tanks on the American front, provides adequate confirmation of Allied expectations.

Meanwhile, British manpower shortages were repeatedly cited as the principal reason why Montgomery's forces were unable to be engaged in more aggressive operations in Normandy. But author Carlo D'Este makes the astounding revelation that "according to British Army records there were more than ample trained infantry personnel available in the United Kingdom to fill Montgomery's shortages," and that from December 1943 to June 1944 there were 12,113 officers and 210,000 other ranks in the infantry available, of which only 48% were committed to Montgomery's 21st Army Group. With over 100,000 infantry in reserve, it is suggested that Churchill and Brooke were hedging on the success of OVERLORD as they did in 1940 before the fall of France. In any event D'Este says, "the evidence at present available suggests that the infantry shortage which plagued Montgomery and other senior commanders for the remainder of the war was a myth."

It was apparent that it had been useful for the British people and soldiers to have a "military hero" as it was important for morale that they be unified behind their leaders. Even today most Britons are reluctant to admit Montgomery's mistakes and poor leadership, and they praise him highly for his training ability and high troop morale, as well as for his supreme confidence and "positive attitude." But only a biased few credit him with the aggressive initiative and leadership which were necessary for the British forces to obtain military victories. Montgomery not only failed to win a battle in Normandy, but his conceited and ornery demands created such disruption among Allied leaders that much distraction and many unnecessary compromises were made in the interest of Allied unity, causing the war to be needlessly extended with unjustifiable casualties.

Although British and American forces were about even in number before the break-out from Normandy, and even though the British faced the concentrated German armor, British losses were half the American losses which appeared to confirm the Yank's charge that the British had badly failed to make an aggressive and powerful breakout at Caen.

Truly, if Bernard Montgomery was the "finest British general since Wellington," as Ronald Lewin has claimed, it is easier to understand the disappointing record of the British military in World War II—a record which included only two important victories, the Battle of Britain and El Alamein, and many defeats before the enemy collapsed. Montgomery, in fact, became the major problem for the Allies in Normandy and until the end of the war he continued to give the Allied Supreme Headquarters many unnecessary difficulties. Unfortunately, General Eisenhower made his two most critical mistakes of the war following Montgomery's miserable performance in Normandy. First, after the GOODWOOD fiasco, Ike permitted himself to be persuaded not to have Montgomery replaced, and secondly, he refused to give Montgomery clear and specific orders as to what he wanted him to do following GOODWOOD. Winston Churchill blundered badly when he grudgingly continued to support Montgomery in spite of his poor performances in Italy and Normandy. However, the Prime Minister had likely found himself stuck with a largely artificially created hero who could not be gotten rid of without creating serious war-time disruptions of morale.

The decisive blunders of Adolf Hitler in Normandy included his policy of divided command. He refused to give neither von Rundstedt or Rommel the authority to utilize the all-important panzer reserve forces in the west which alone, in the absence of an effective Luftwaffe, might have possibly turned the Allied invasion into defeat. His refusal to release the armored reserve in time to reach Normandy against incessant air attacks for a counterattack powerful enough to turn back the invaders was a colossal error of the greatest magnitude. As a consequence, adequate armored force was not placed close to the potential beachheads, inexcusable hassles delayed the forward movement of the panzers, and limited available units were committed to the battle on a piecemeal basis which allowed them to be chewed-up before an adequate force could be massed to "push the enemy back into the sea." Then Hitler's final fatal error involved his

refusal, as in North Africa, Italy and Russia, to permit the Wehrmacht to withdraw and regroup after the breakout which led to the wasted slaughter of his troops and the total defeat of the German Army in Normandy.

Undoubtedly, the greatest of all the German blunders permitted the brilliant success of the Allied deception plan of FORTITUDE to effectively demobilize the entire German Fifteenth Army which would have made a decisive difference in Normandy. Firmly fixed in their belief that the assault would take place in the Calais area, nineteen infantry divisions stood harmlessly out of action during the most crucial stage of the Normandy campaign and clearly cost Germany its last chance to have changed the outcome of the war. According to author Alan Michie, "Lack of infantry was the major cause of the enemy's defeat in Normandy," causing tanks to be used in the line rather than for their most effective use in massed deployment. By the time the Fifteenth Army was committed to the Battle of Normandy, it was too late! And finally, by scattering his armies from Belgium to Bordeaux, instead of concentrations at the most logical points of attack, Hitler had practically given the initiative to his enemies.

In consideration of the vast Allied superiority in air and naval power, as well as in men and materiel, it is probable that there was no way that the Germans could have prevented the British and American forces from a successful landing regardless of whether it had been launched in the Calais area or in Normandy. Except at Omaha, the ease with which the Allies got ashore, their vast dominance in manpower and arms made it highly likely that the invasion would have succeeded against much weaker defenses a year or more earlier which would have avoided many of the unfortunate consequences after the war. While the Germans committed both an unexpected and almost unbelievable series of blunders that prevented an effective counterattack by concentrated infantry and armor against the landings, it is highly improbable that there was any way that they could have successfully prevented the eventual success of the powerful and overwhelming Allied assault.

Another major deficiency of the Allies was their failure to produce equal or better weapons earlier in the conflict. The Germans were equipped with weapons superior to those of the Allies regarding small arms, anti-tank guns, machine-guns and sub-machine guns, grenades, mortars and, especially, their tanks and 88-mm guns, not to mention their "secret weapons." The Allied failure to

produce adequate armor and firepower was a major cause of the frustrated progress and excessive casualties of the Normandy campaign. Although the Allied production of tanks remarkably reached 24,843 for the British and 88,410 for the Americans (of which 25,600 went to the British), while the Germans produced only 24,630, Allied armor remained greatly inferior to those of their enemy. The general deficiency of Allied armor and the ineffective firepower of Allied tanks against German armor, greatly prolonged the conflict and substantially increased casualties. Generally, even in such excessive numbers, Allied tanks were no match for the enemy and both British and American soldiers, tragically at great sacrifice of life, could seldom knockout a German tank except by almost superhuman effort.

According to other historians, another major mistake in Normandy involved the Allies failure to appreciate the ability of the tough and experienced German veterans from the Eastern Front to survive the most difficult conditions while inflicting heavy casualties. In Normandy critical planning deficiencies became evident when the total Allied superiority of naval and air power failed to overcome the German ability to put up an effective defense. The Allied generals also overlooked the essential rule that only infantry, not artillery, naval or air bombardment, can dislodge a well-entrenched enemy. Indisputably, without the dominance of the battlefield by airpower, which largely prevented the massing of Germany's formidable armored offensives, the outcome of the Battle of Normandy would have been considerably different.

To this day, the British-American controversy over the conduct of the war against the Germans in Normandy continues. Many Britishers argue that had the United States agreed to Churchill's proposals for actions in Southeastern Europe, the war would have ended much sooner, the Balkans could have been pre-empted against Soviet occupation, and the West would have denied Soviet prominence in Central Europe. On the other hand, the Americans contend that in 1943 the original point of a "Second Front" was to draw German forces away from the Eastern Front at a time when the final outcome in Russia remained very much in doubt. Germany had practically stripped its forces in the west and few effective units were left to oppose an invasion. Then without British opposition, OVERLORD would have been launched, the war would have ended at least one year earlier, huge casualties and great devastation would have been averted, Germany would have surrendered before

its occupation, a united and democratic Germany would have existed after the war, the Soviets would not have overrun East Europe, Communism would not have been forced upon much of the divided and armed world in the Cold War, and the United Nations could have been a more effective international organization enforcing world law and maintaining world peace.

To quote one of Britain's foremost military historians, J.F.C. Fuller said that in 1943 the Atlantic Wall consisted of "little more than coastal earthworks," and declared that an Allied invasion of Normandy, instead of North Africa, would have been successful and the war, its casualties and political consequences, could have been ended a year earlier with a totally different outcome and influence on world history. Admittedly, the Normandy campaign was a difficult and frustrating time for the British forces who fought with much bravery and with great sacrifice. It was also an extremely trying time for the Supreme Commander whose responsibilities were awesome enough without the unnecessary difficulties of a conceited and obstinate subordinate. While Montgomery's fame remained undeserved, the glory of victory passed to the quiet and competent leadership of Omar Bradley with the smashing success of his First Army's great breakout at St. Lo, and to George Patton's Third Army's brilliant exploitation which dramatically turned the stalemated campaign into one of the most successful military operations in the war.

By the time the Normandy invasion was finally undertaken by the Allies, the Germans had already been badly defeated by the Soviets and were in the process of being driven out of Russia. It appears that Hitler's last chance for survival depended upon a German victory in Normandy after which the forces in the west could have been rushed to the east in an effort to stop the onrushing Red Army. Likely that would still not have been enough to save Germany from a devastating revenge by the conquering Soviet juggernaut. But OVERLORD not only insured the destruction of Hitler's Nazi Reich, it also prevented Soviet Communism from completely dominating all of Europe. Finally, it was the principal victory for the Allies in the west and Nazi Germany would never again recover from the mortal wound inflicted in Normandy. And from the standpoint of the ultimate survival of freedom and democracy over Nazism and Communism, the long-delayed invasion by the Allies at Normany was probably the most important military victory in history.

Chapter 11

The German Opposition to Hitler

The absence of a successful opposition to Adolf Hitler in Germany was surely one of the greatest tragedies of World War II. If the National Socialist Party had been prevented from gaining power, or had there been a successful overthrow of the Nazi government, the rule of law could have been restored, Germany would likely have become a permanently democratic republic, worldwide warfare would not have claimed over fifty million lives, and mankind would not have been plagued with the subsequent fifty-year struggle between the super-powers which wasted much of the world's human and natural resources.

It still remains practically impossible to understand how a diabolical madman could gain total control of a highly developed and supposedly Christian nation, and to lead it together with almost all of Europe to such widespread terror, death, and destruction? Nor can it be understood how a "civilized people" could have so widely supported such a repulsive and barbaric political party until it obtained total control so that no effective opposition remained? The enthusiastic support of the Nazis by the German people and the extent of the hatred of the Germans for the Jews was so offensive to all principles of a civilized society that it exceeds all rational comprehension and will forever remain a brand of shame upon the German people. Furthermore, it is widely believed that only in Germany could such a barbaric phenomena have occurred and that the support and acceptance of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi domination of Germany by the German people was the basic cause of World War II and its catastrophic consequences for mankind.

Initially, however, most Germans were opposed to the vulgar and violent Nazis even though Hitler had obtained wide popular support by reviving the national economy and with his emotional patriotism. His pledges to protect Germany from Communism, to create jobs by rearming Germany, and to replace the

Weimar Government of the "traitorous Socialists who had surrendered in World War I and brought economic chaos to Germany," found a ready emotional response of anger and revenge by the German people. Yet thousands of Germans courageously opposed the initial Nazi violations of individual rights and law and order and suffered discrimination, fear and intimidation, confiscation of possessions, denial of means of livelihood, exile or imprisonment, torture, and even death. Other thousands of decent Germans were opposed to what was happening in their country but knew that opposition in a police state would likely result in arrest and terror for themselves and their loved ones. Nonetheless, many others engaged in various forms of passive resistance and secret underground activities, waiting for the resources and the opportunity to successfully move against the Hitlerites and, as some Germans would later claim, that even being passive towards the Nazis was a form of resistance. The fact was, however, that the absence of resistance was interpreted by the Nazis as acquiescence, if not approval, and was generally considered as being cooperation with the Nazi government.

Insurrections, however, particularly against a dictatorship which has seized total control of the national police and military power, require substantial external intervention and assistance as well as desperate internal conditions for the successful political overthrow of any state. Otherwise, opportunities for successful resistance is limited, political opposition is forcibly prevented, there are no means of mass communication, large public gatherings are forbidden, the fear of arrest, imprisonment and execution is prevalent, and the means of motivating and mobilizing the masses adequately to risk their lives for violent action against a strong regime is difficult and almost impossible, regardless of how evil and brutal it may be.

Nonetheless, largely due to the "barbaric savagery" of the unprovoked German aggressions which plunged the world into another tragic conflict, world public opinion refuses to recognize any excuse for the failure of the German people to have saved mankind from the vicious brutality of their Nazi Fuehrer, his fanatic followers, and the German military. Furthermore, it is the conviction of most of mankind that the German people alone were responsible for what Adolf Hitler did to the world and for it they have brought upon themselves an enmity and scorn that will never be overcome. It is also widely believed that the excesses of the Nazis evolved from the historic German character, the aggressive and bar-

bane nature of a martial Teutonic tradition with its mystic beliefs in the violent and demonic pagan gods of Valhalla, the glorification of war, the repeated historic German aggressions against its neighbors, the advocacy of the superiority of the Nordic race, its ethic of "the nobility of death" as championed by German philosophers, and as found in the emotional and stirring music of Richard Wagner. As Hitler himself put it, "Whoever wants to understand National Socialist Germany must know Wagner."

Today the German people complain that international opinion was greatly influenced by Allied war-time propaganda which failed to make any distinction between the dictator and his subjects by asserting that the German people had brought upon the world the horrors of a brutally aggressive world war and deserved nothing less than the capital punishment of total destruction. They argue it was that conviction, founded on the desire for revenge as well as hatred against Hitler and Nazism, which formed the basis for Franklin D. Roosevelt's insistence throughout the war that nothing short of a "total victory," following the unconditional surrender of Germany, was acceptable to the Allies. However, it was a policy, they say, which made it possible for the Nazis to convince the German people that death fighting for their country was preferable to surrender, occupation, and slavery by the Communist "Bolsheviks," that it defeated the aim of an early Allied victory, and helped the Nazi regime to prolong the war until Germany had been destroyed and Central Europe was occupied by Soviet Communism.

While the ultimate responsibility for having permitted Adolf Hitler to gain power, as well as for the failure to overthrow his violent regime, must properly rest upon the German people, the responsibility for the consequences of the Nazi horror to Germany and the world cannot be placed upon the Germans alone. Clearly, the prejudice and hatred of the Versailles Treaty led to many of the unjust conditions which Hitler was able to successfully exploit for his seizure of national power. The failure of Great Britain and the United States to fulfill their guarantees under the treaty, and the inexcusable appeasement of Adolf Hitler's initial aggressions by Britain and France, not only permitted the Nazi dictator to solidify his power with dramatic political victories, but it also "reinvigorated the martial tendencies of the German character." Many Germans claim that there was no practical alternative to Hitler in the early thirties for the Weimar Republic had failed, the rightists wanted the monarchy, the leftists wanted Communism,

and the National Socialists originally represented the middle course. Later, opposition to the regime was discouraged by the normal tendency for average people to conform to prevailing circumstances, and by the natural loyalty most citizens feel for their mother country. Many Germans also say that their "struggle for survival" was at stake, that almost everyone believed they had been made a scapegoat at Versailles, and that all Germans lived in mortal fear of being enslaved by Stalin's Soviet Union which had only recently imprisoned and murdered many millions of the Russian people.

It is true that the cynical manipulations of the German Communists by Josef Stalin, as well as the intrigues of the German conservatives who sought the return of the monarchy, greatly helped to undermine the stability of the democratic Weimar Republic. And, equally destructive, Franklin D. Roosevelt supported by Winston Churchill, committed the critically fatal blunder of refusing to permit Western Allied contact with, or encouragement and support of, the German opposition to Adolf Hitler for fear that Josef Stalin and the Soviet Union might believe that the West was seeking a separate peace with Germany. Most probably, had not the Allied strategy of the total destruction of Germany been decreed by Roosevelt's policy of unconditional surrender, which banned any assistance to the German resistance and was fervently maintained by Roosevelt throughout the war, and had the Allies given all possible encouragement and aid to the Germans who opposed Hitler, the Nazi control of Germany might have been overthrown and a strong and unified Germany could have been a democratic and peaceful influence in Central Europe after the war.

Still there can never be any excuse for unprovoked armed aggression or for the brutal persecution and death of many millions of human beings by the Nazis, and it is true that the overwhelming majority of German citizens failed to demonstrate a civilized degree of morale courage and decency, it must be recognized that there were many Germans who bravely opposed the Nazis at great risk to themselves and their families. It was also a fact that many Germans had been traumatized by the sacrifices, death and suffering of the long and non-victorious World War I, by the sudden transition from monarchy to republic, in being branded as war criminals by the enemy, with the occupation by enemy armed forces, the burden of paying reparations, the economic chaos, the lack of jobs and food, widespread Communist riots, denial of the right to maintain the

national defense, dispossession of large areas of Germany and its colonies abroad, the death of millions by the Allied blockade, and the humiliation of having been forcibly reduced from a great power to the status of a "cowardly surrender by republican traitors." Furthermore, Britain and France also shared much of the responsibility for the Hitler phenomena since their appeasement enabled his successful aggressions to produce the emotional excitement of the German people which were controlled and manipulated into support for Adolf Hitler.

Although the debate will likely never end over the causes of the conditions on which Hitler exploited his rise to power, it is clear that the great depression that economically paralyzed the world economy in 1929 contributed to the extreme national emergency which helped Adolf Hitler to takeover the political control of Germany. The ravaging poverty, suffering, and starvation which the Nazis used to stir up blame and hatred against Britain, France and the United States was deceitfully turned into opportunities for the seizure of power by the Nazis through "legal means," after which the German Reich was to be subjected to "the revolution of the National Socialist Party." It can be expected that when human beings are without work and food, they will follow whomever may convincingly promise an end to their deprivations and hopelessness which often results in conditions of demagoguery. At that the evil and cunning Adolf Hitler qualified as history's greatest demagogue.

When Hitler first began his moves to seize power, conditions in Germany were believed to be so disastrous that most of the population had concluded that only radical measures could save them from a revolution and Communist takeover. There was also widespread prejudice and hate against the German Jews who had acquired many positions of economic and political prominence which most Germans resented. The situation had become opportunistic for a radical demagogue and, with his total control of propaganda and his emotional exploitation of the distress, anger and hate of the masses, the German people were cleverly led into believing that the National Socialists would take political control away from the political parties which were destroying Germany, re-establish national honor and pride, create jobs for everyone, reunite and rearm the Germanic people, and once again restore Germany as an economically and politically strong Reich. In most elections everywhere, voters tend to support the candidate who they believe will presently give them what they want without much

concern for what the consequences may be in the future. Most Germans, however, were attracted by the emotional hate and vengeance which Hitler exemplified and they had little concern for anything other than Hitler's promises for personal security and national pride. Furthermore, even those who were aware of the "hatred and violence" in his book *Mein Kampf*, considered it to be mere political rhetoric and that, once he gained power, his policies would be modified and altered by the nature and complexity of national and international forces.

In spite of the Versailles Treaty, the record shows that although the Communists were conspiring to proclaim a "soviet republic" in Germany, and Nazi stormtroopers were beating and killing opponents in the streets even while the voters were being promised "jobs, glory, and revenge" by a new and greater Deutschland, still the vast majority of the German people did not support Adolf Hitler in his early bids for power. In the election of July 1932, with more than five million Germans unemployed and the Communist party rapidly growing under inflationary chaos, the Nazis obtained only thirty-seven percent of the vote. Still, the sixty-three percent of the Germans who did not support Hitler are criticized for committing the gross blunder of not forming their political parties into a coalition against Adolf Hitler to save Germany. Yet, on the other hand, it was unrealistic to expect that the Communists, Liberals, and Conservatives, as well-established enemies, could have worked together against the Nazis when each political party was desperately engaged in a life and death struggle for what it considered to be the best future political interest of the nation.

Ironically, an intentional blunder by Josef Stalin had helped to create the opportunity for the Nazis to takeover Germany. Initially, after the First World War the German Communist Party was the strongest and the most active force against the National Socialists in Germany. But once the showdown for power in Germany got underway, the Communists were directed by Stalin from Moscow to concentrate their fight against the non-Communist trade unions, and the other political parties, instead of the Nazis. Accordingly, the Communists refused to vote with the Social Democrats to block Hitler's assumption of power. The Communist dictator, from whom the Nazis had learned so much about political subversion, brutality and public tyranny, was convinced that a Nazi takeover would assure the eventual installation of the "dictatorship of the proletariat." As William L. Shirer writes, the Marxist Bolsheviks were confident that "Fascism

represented the last stage of a dying capitalism; after that the Communist deluge!" Thus the cynicism, treachery and terror of the Communist dictator was ruthlessly and brutally exploited by the Nazi dictator.

In the meantime, at the slightest sign of resistance or non-compliance, German citizens were beaten, arrested, thrown into jail, tortured and killed by Nazis thugs. Thousands were placed in concentration camps, an institution together with the practice of genocide which the Nazis had imported from Josef Stalin, and looting, theft, bodily injury, confinement, manslaughter and murder were imposed by "legal" police action against those who refused to conform. Mankind's strong and usually dominant instinct for survival leads most human beings to try to avoid the risk of harm to themselves, their families and their livelihood except under desperate circumstances. When conditions are considered to be so intolerable that any change is for the better, that only strong leadership and firm action can bring order out of chaos, and that excesses will be corrected when order has been restored, support is given where it would not be normally considered. Most human beings are neither heroes nor cowards. But, generally, the human spirit believes that tomorrow will be a better day for life cannot survive without hope.

Under such extreme and violent conditions the Weimar Republic was on the verge of collapse, the Nazi's inevitably became the largest party in the Reichstag, and Hitler sought to convince the weak and dying President Paul von Hindenburg that only the strong rule of his Nazi party could prevent a Communist coup. On January 30, 1933 the old general, in the face of the massing of many thousands of workers and the threat of a general strike, and under the influence of his son and other political manipulators, reluctantly appointed the former corporal Adolf Hitler as Chancellor of Germany to take control of the government provided he could gain a majority in the Reichstag. At last, the fanatic Nazi believed he had the opportunity to seize the power for his National Socialist revolution for a Reich of a "thousand years." But he knew that he needed to associate the National Socialists with the principles and interests of the centers of influence which was inspired by the "infiltrate and conquer" tactics used by the Communists. He considered it important to at least appear to have used "legal" means to have acquired the political strength to capture the total control of Germany.

On February 28 the new Chancellor used a Nazi-contrived fire in the Reichstag, blaming it on the Communists, to convince the aging President to suspend civil liberties "to protect the state against violence." An "Emergency Ordinance" was issued which abolished the basic individual rights established under the Weimar constitution. Under the ordinance persons could be arrested and detained without due process and anything they might do or say against the Nazi control of the state was outlawed. In effect, it gave Hitler the all-important power to extend his control over the national police in all German states and it was the death sentence for almost all potentially effective opposition within Germany. Unfortunately for German democracy, instead of active resistance, the Social Democrats and the trade unions made a critical blunder by believing they could best survive by being passive. As a consequence, when the Reichstag was suddenly dissolved, and Adolf Hitler's Nazis assumed the direction of all political power in Germany, any possibility of any other effective political influence in Germany was eliminated.

Meanwhile, Hitler pursued a relentless campaign to consolidate his power and to obtain the approval of the majority of the German people by every legal and illegal means possible. The new ruling National Socialists immediately banned all opposition meetings, publications and demonstrations of any kind which might "endanger public security." 4,000 Communist officials, many Social Democrat and liberal leaders, including members of the Reichstag, were arrested, newspapers were shut down, political party offices were closed, stormtroopers terrorized the streets, thousands of citizens were beaten and tortured, and only the Nazi political party was permitted to publicly campaign for election.

Regardless of the Nazi domination of police control and the use of terror and intimidation, the majority of the German people continued to reject Adolf Hitler in the election of March 5, 1933. The Social Democrats held on as the second largest party, the Communists polled nearly five million votes, and while the Nazis had gained 288 seats in the Reichstag, they still could not produce a majority without the fifty-two votes of the Nationalist Party. They had failed to obtain the two-thirds vote needed to push through the parliament whatever laws Hitler wanted for his dictatorial rule. And there still existed active forms of legal opposition to Hitler, so long as neither the Nazis nor the Communists were

banned by law, but the weak Weimar democracy could not control the excesses of both parties as they continued to struggle in the streets for power.

The initial opposition to the control of Germany by the Nazis had been led by various individuals who were not motivated by political or military considerations, but were rather persons with Christian convictions who opposed the ideologies and the practices of the National Socialists. And soon large numbers of Germans who opposed Nazism were being intimidated, beaten up or killed by brutal violence which greatly reduced much of the opposition to Adolf Hitler. By the end of 1933, again following Soviet example, the Nazis had established about fifty concentration camps in Germany, and after the "Blood Purge" of the Nazi SA military leadership in which 1,000 persons were killed including generals, politicians and resistance leaders, most of the potential civilian opponents had been incarcerated or liquidated. For example, while more than 27,000 concentration camp inmates were said to be freed by Hitler's Christmas 1933 amnesty, few of them actually regained their freedom from Hitler's henchmen Herman Goering and Heinrich Himmler.

By such brutal means the Nazi Chancellor acquired the total power he sought for widespread conquest by his "Thousand Year Reich." After gaining control of the Reichstag by terror and force, on March 23, 1933 his "Enabling Law," opposed only by the Social Democrats after the Communists had been expelled from the Reichstag, abolished all existing law and gave Hitler the power to make laws without any parliamentary role or restraint. Thereby, while the other political parties had attempted to preserve their existence by going along with the Nazis, all parties were soon banned and their "legal" elimination removed the last practical likelihood of any effective organized political resistance and gave the Nazis the totalitarian control of Germany.

In the Reichstag election on November 12, 1933 with only one party on the ballot, the Nazis claimed their ninety-two percent vote to be a spectacular victory. The overwhelming majority of the German people had ratified Adolf Hitler. They had willingly subjected their fate to a dictatorship in Germany ruled by the fanatic Hitler and his vulgar and violent Nazis. Most civilized people throughout the world believed that the German people had, in effect, endorsed totalitarian brutality and illegality and had submitted Germany to the fate of a gangster state. Tragically thereafter, opposition in practically every segment of German society

ceased and, as Peter Hoffmann reports, "acquiescence, weakness, opportunism, delusion and error" had taken over before the onslought of ruthless force and intimidation. The once great and powerful German Reich had been subjected to the rule of "legal barbarism." The nazification of Germany was complete!

Some resistance groups had come together before the Nazis had fully applied their brutality to terrorize and intimidate the German people into total submission. There was strong opposition in Bavaria when the Nazis began to impose their control of the national government over the traditional independence of the individual German states. Using the threat of intervention by military force after stormtroopers had created street disorders, the national government forced Bavaria to accept Berlin directed Nazis to "restore law and order." Soon all states were infiltrated, undermined and forced to yield to the laws imposed by the Nazi control of the central government. Still numerous courageous acts took place in various parts of Germany and many persons were jailed and executed. But the power of the control of the national government had become so strong and brutal that even the major political parties that had been temporarily associated with the Nazi seizure of control failed to resist the takeover. And the terror and intimidation had become so pervasive that there were few opportunities for individuals to engage in any form of effective resistance without external assistance. That left only public resistance involving scattered and ineffective acts of desperate personal courage and symbolism.

However, substantial individual and unorganized opposition took place as indicated by the records of the conviction and sentencing to prison on political grounds of 225,000 persons over a six-year period. A far greater number of resistants were either murdered or sent to concentration camps without trial and without record. The Gestapo reached everywhere with 100,000 informers and even family members informed on one another. People who voted against the regime were sought out for reprisals, and anyone who said or did anything against the Nazis, was subjected to brutal treatment which often resulted in imprisonment or death. Hitler's gangsters ruthlessly insured that every possible source of potential resistance was liquidated to enable Adolf Hitler to impose his fanatic will upon Germany without opposition. To repeat what Oswald Spengler said, the Nazi success in Germany was "no victory, for the enemies were lacking."

The appeasement of Hitler by the Western powers also helped him to gain absolute control and practically destroyed the German opposition by making it appear that he had brilliantly and bloodlessly succeeded in advancing Germany's interests at home and abroad. Once the Allies had permitted Germany to rearm with impunity, economic chaos was quickly turned into full industrial production and high employment. As a consequence, the Fuehrer received the gratitude and loyalty of most Germans whose lives were improved by the revived national economy. They had become proud of the "miraculous recovery" from defeat and chaos to a "dynamic and forceful Fatherland" which greatly swelled the Nazi party with "an emotional and fanatic pride over the progress and power of the herrenvolk" (master race). Meanwhile, many Western leaders visited the Fuehrer according him international respectability which increased his influence and reinforced his belief that he could attain his aggressive aims at acceptable risks and costs. Then there were few Germans who were not proud of the new Germany, few would object to its government, and even fewer would risk their lives and being branded a traitor to oppose a regime which had so substantially improved the economic condition, restored the honor of the Fatherland, and brought about such a promising future for a stronger and united Third Reich.

Others opposed to the Nazis involved themselves in passive resistance that subjected them to the possibility of persecution and imprisonment at any time. But the few and isolated incidences of passive resistance which were revealed had little effect in stemming the Nazi tide. As Hitler's control rapidly became absolute, it became increasingly obvious to many Germans that it would be a useless sacrifice to become involved in acts against the police state. Some dared to help some of the Jews, jobs and promotions were refused, political favors were ignored, swastikas were not displayed, "Heil Hitler" was not used, and many continued to attend church openly. But such actions had little effect except to offer a slight relief to the individual conscience. Even the actions of the long-standing secret underground Leninist organization, which had sought to liberalize Socialist dogma, was limited to small efforts to increase worker agitations and the smuggling of anti-Hitler pamphlets into Germany. However, the "Rote Kapelle" (Red Orchestra) became one of the few and better known early resistance groups working within Germany and it was the principal espionage source for the Soviet Union.

By 1935, the Nazis were concentrating their heaviest actions in exposing and destroying Labor, Communist, and Social Democrat organizations. The Gestapo was relentless in using surveillance, infiltration and penetration, detection, arrest, detention, imprisonment and murder. Hundreds of union and Social Democrat leaders were arrested and tried by Nazi kangaroo courts and most of them served long periods in concentration camps, if they survived. Most of the underground groups, knowing action would be fatal, struggled merely to exist. The Socialist underground in most of the larger cities continued to distribute their materials, at least, to known members. But by the end of the year, Himmler's black shirts and secret agents had eliminated all underground organizations capable of offering any substantial resistance. From that time forward opposition mainly arose from small groups or individuals. The following year many of the remaining Communists and Socialists fled to Spain where some 5,000 Germans joined the International Brigade fighting against the "Fascists," which included the German forces fighting in Spain. Then what little resistance subsequently evolved within Germany arose from the brave but sad sacrifice of numerous individuals which was largely symbolic with little hope of changing the brutal and pervasive control by the Nazis. Such limited activity consisted mostly in distributing leaflets and the maintenance of cell groups in various parts of the country, such as the "Rote Kapelle," and the "White Rose" in which the young Scholl brother and sister hopelessly sacrificed their lives in a brave but only symbolic gesture of defiance.

Two years later Adolf Hitler and his Nazis had seized total control of the German state. To most Germans, his first four years had been spectacularly successful as he brazenly defied the restrictions of the Versailles Treaty, marched his troops back into the German Rhineland, created jobs for millions of workers with the rearmament of Germany, revived a chaotic economy, merged Germany with Austria "peacefully," occupied Czechoslovakia and returned the Sudeten Germans to the Fatherland, restored the glory of a new and powerful Third Reich, separated the French from Poland, formed the "Pact of Steel" with the Italian dictator Mussolini, and effectively mobilized the most aggressive people in Europe. According to Hermann Goering at the end of 1936, "we are already at war." It became a monumental accomplishment that had been largely granted him by the blunders and mistakes of his future enemies, and unfortunately, it

had made the Nazi Fuehrer supremely confident and dangerously aggressive with his demonic power. Generally, the German people were ecstatic!

Originally Hitler had determined that his Third Reich would not be militarily prepared to back up his foreign policy objectives until 1943. But by early 1938 the Nazi "revolution" was considered to have been completed as the last of the "conservatives," who von Hindenburg had thought would control the Nazis, were eliminated. Once the opposition in Germany had been destroyed it became obvious that the ruthless and power-mad dictator would direct his aggressive forces against his weak and unprepared neighbors. Up until that time, as historians conclude, the army could have easily overthrown Hitler and saved Germany as well as much of humanity. But when the Fuehrer set out to consolidate the German people into his "Greater Reich," he made the fatal mistake of believing he could attain his initial objectives with the threat of war without actually becoming involved in war until he had amassed such strength that none would dare challenge Germany. While Britain and France were considered to be Germany's greatest enemies, and would continue to be the major barrier to his dream of restoring the greatness of the Fatherland, Hitler was convinced they would not be willing to pay the price for involving themselves in another conflict so soon after World War I.

One of the major forms of organized resistance against the dictatorial control of Germany which continued in spite of violence and oppression was centered in the churches where numerous clergymen bravely defied Adolf Hitler. Pastor Martin Niemoller became the best known church leader for his courageous resistance to the Nazis for which he suffered many years in a concentration camp. Initially most of the pastors in Germany, like the overwhelming majority of the German people, welcomed Hitler's rise to the chancellorship in 1933 in the belief that he would eliminate the social and political turmoil and the lack of law and order which appeared to threaten the life of Germany itself. Many pastors also went along with the regime in the "German Christian" movement which considered Marxism, world Jewry, and Freemasons as Germany's greatest enemies. Later, Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer joined Niemoller and led thousands of pastors into religious resistance against the National Socialists while thousands more avoided the struggle. Some 5,000 members of the clergy were sent to concentration camps and more than 2,000 were killed or died in prison. Other

courageous church leaders included Dr. Friedrich von Bodelschwingh, Bishop Wurm, Cardinal von Galen, Cardinal von Preysing, and Dr. Hans Schoenfeld, among others.

Most of the opposition from religious institutions, however, was localized and while there were many cases of courage and sacrifice by both Catholic and Protestant clergy, their resistance was not effective since it was not organized on a national basis. Many other pastors and priests believed that resistance would harm the church and remained neutral. But the resisting pastors did succeed in blocking Nazis efforts to control the Evangelical Church, with which sixty percent of the German population was affiliated, and it succeeded in forcing the Hitlerites to expose their usual brutal tactics to bring about compliance by the church.

The Vatican, however, in an effort to preserve the Catholic Church, negotiated a controversial agreement with Hitler which enabled him to claim it as his "first international success." While it gave the Church certain rights, it banned all Catholic political, social and professional organizations. But the continuing persecution and oppression of churches throughout the Reich became so intense and apparent that numerous Catholic and Protestant leaders felt compelled to speak out and engage in actions of resistance. Thereby, the religious community managed to continue various forms of opposition throughout the war and successfully frustrated Nazi efforts to impose its doctrine and to destroy the church as an institution.

Earlier, Hitler had recognized that the strength and power of the military was potentially the greatest source of opposition to the Nazi political control of Germany. He skillfully undercut most of that possibility with his pledges to scrap the Versailles restrictions, restoration of Germany's military might, and to eliminate the Communist threat. Cleverly, he used the issues of greatest importance to the military, as well as the industrialists, to eliminate potential opposition in the armed forces and to acquire the financial backing of Germany's most powerful economic leaders. By emphasizing the great emotional political issues which overrode all other popular concerns, the Fuehrer was able to distract public attention from his real objectives and to cause the German people to overlook the individual and collective injustices and excesses of the Nazis. Again, as in the past, national patriotism regained the emotional dominance of a people who had

historically possessed strong militant and aggressive instincts to take by force whatever they wished from their neighbors.

Generally, four major phases of resistance developed in Germany which were initially small but possessed great potential for effective action. Each could have made a substantial, if not successful, effort to overthrow the Nazi government if the West had responded favorably to their requests for the support and aid they believed to be necessary. The first of these organized oppositions occurred from July to September 1938 during the Munich crisis among the top officers of the Army Supreme Command when it appeared that Hitler would involve Germany in a war against France and Great Britain. The next major center of opposition occurred from September 1939 to May 1940 within the central intelligence bureau of Admiral Wilhelm Canaris's Abwehr in Berlin and was based mainly on Hitler's preparations to attack Poland and concern over becoming involved in another World War. In the period from late 1942 to 1943, largely as a consequence of the disastrous losses against the Soviet Union, strong opposition against Hitler arose among German officers in the Army Group Center Command on the Eastern Front. And lastly, from March to July 20, 1944, the final potentially effective move against the Nazis was undertaken by the Home Army Command Staff which ended with the tragically unsuccessful "Valkyrie" attempt on Hitler's life by Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg.

Carl Goerdeler, Mayor of Leipzig, was an influential and dedicated German patriot who became the major activist behind numerous political opposition movements against Hitler. By his courage and strong character he gained the confidence of both Liberal and Socialist resistance groups and, had Hitler been overthrown, undoubtedly Goerdeler would have become Chancellor of a new democratic government. Known as the "circuit rider," he served as the link between the conservative and centrist groups who opposed Hitler and he was so widely popular, influential and respected that he was not arrested by the Nazis until 1944. Beginning in 1937, his efforts on numerous occasions to gain the support of Churchill and Roosevelt were practically ignored.

Other early civilian opponents of Hitler's National Socialists were such courageous men as Ewald von Kleist, a leading intellectual; Johannes Popitz, Minister of Finance for Prussia; Fabian von Schlabrendorff, a young lawyer from a prominent family; Ernst Niekisch, editor of a resistance publication; former trade

union officials Julius Leber, Jakob Kaiser and Wilhelm Leuschner; Ulrich von Hassell, diplomat; Karl Ludwig von Guttenberg, editor of a Catholic monthly; Gestapo officials Arthur Nebe and Hans Bernd Gisevius; Hjalmar Schacht, former financial expert; Count Albrecht Bernstorff, Professor Jens Peter Jessen, and lawyer Carl Landbehn. Among other anti-Nazi patriots were Count Helmuth von Moltke, Adam von Trott zu Solz, Theodor Stilzer, and Dr. Eugen Gerstenmaier, all of the Kreisau Circle. Active Social Democrat opponents were Rudolf Breitscheid, Rudolf Hilferding, Wilhelm Hoegner, Carlo Mierendorff, Theodor Haubach, Ludwig Schwamb and Adolf Reichwein.

But limited opportunities under the absolute control of the Nazi police state restricted opposition forcing activists to confine themselves mainly to intellectual pursuits. They did not possess the mass following, the foreign support, nor the resources necessary to overthrow a repressive police state dictatorship. Innumerable efforts were made, however, to convince the Allied Western Powers to assist their opposition by concerted actions which would deny Hitler further political successes, to threaten the use of force against him to stop his aggressions against Germany's neighbors, and to provide the opposition with resources of funds and arms necessary to overthrow the Nazi government. Largely due to the attitude of Franklin Roosevelt, the United States and Britain, however, in one of the most indefensible blunders of World War II, continued to ignore the resisters warnings and requests throughout the conflict by refusing to grant either recognition nor assistance. It was an intentional and inexcusable policy which tragically disabled the German resistance.

Another opposition group was centered in the German Foreign Office where, as trained diplomats, they saw the consequences for Germany of Hitler's aggressions against other countries, and they were repulsed by the crude Nazi outsiders who interfered with their professional activities. Still, disapproval was not opposition, and the number of actual activists in the Foreign Office was small, consisting most notably of their leader State Secretary Baron von Weizsaecker, Erich and Theo Kordt, Albrecht von Kessel, Count Ulrich von Schwerin-Schwanenfeld, Count Peter Yorck von Wartenburg, and Eduard Brucklemaier. While Weizsaecker did manage to warn the British that Hitler was preparing to attack Czechoslovakia, and played an active role in dissident affairs, he maintained his position under the regime to the end of the war.

That left the German Army with its vast resources of leadership and power as the only center of a potentially successful opposition to the illegal, repressive, and war-mongering government of Adolf Hitler. Generals Ludwig Beck and Kurt von Hammerstein were two of the early military leaders who opposed the Nazis. However, the rabid dictator quickly saw that only the military possessed the force which could block his takeover of the government and, by requiring all officers to take an oath of personal allegiance to their Fuehrer and Commander-in-Chief, loyalty became a question of honor which, particularly in wartime, neutralized much of the nation's strongest source of effective resistance. Initially, the officer corps had been delighted with Hitler's contempt of the "unjust" Versailles restrictions followed by the rearmament and expansion of Germany's military capabilities, so few officers opposed the Nazi seizure of power. But resistance began to occur when some of the higher ranking officers saw that Germany was being led into another disastrous war which it could not win. The officer corps was also shakened by the trumped-up scandals used to destroy Generals Werner von Blomberg and Werner von Fritsch after which sixteen other top-ranked generals were relieved and forty-four others were reassigned by Adolf Hitler.

By April 1937, Goerdeler began working with South German industrialists and Robert Bosch against the Nazis. They financed his trips to Britain and the United States seeking support and help but his proposals were not considered to be realistic nor desirable. He also urged the West to take a strong stand against Germany's demands on its neighbors. But the British and the French committed the faux pas of placing no faith in the strength or influence of his group while ridiculously believing that it would be improper to negotiate with dissidents while trying to persuade the Nazi government to cease its aggressions.

Former General von Kleist was the first of a number of dissidents who visited London in August 1938 to warn the British of Hitler's continuing aggressive intentions. Kleist, with the knowledge of both Canaris and his associate Colonel Hans Oster, bore a message from General Ludwig Beck, Wehrmacht Chief of Staff, that if there was proof that the British would fight if the Czechs were attacked, "I will make an end to this regime." Kleist informed the British that war was certain unless Britain intervened. General Beck, believing that Germany's military forces were not prepared to risk war with the West, and possibly Russia as well, opposed Hitler's plans for aggression. He had convened a

meeting of the highest generals, most of whom shared his beliefs, but they had not the courage to attempt to force the dictator to abandon his demands against the Czechs, and Beck resigned his office. As it became apparent that Hitler had made up his mind to go to war, if required, to expand and consolidate a greater German Reich, many of the top military objectors became committed against the Nazis under Beck's leadership. Thus in the year just before the war began, the Goerdeler-Beck leadership brought together substantial groups of committed opponents within political, diplomatic, and military circles which possessed a potential for effective action against the Nazi regime—subject to the obtainment of the necessary encouragement and support from the West.

Many Germans, particularly in the Foreign Office and the Wehrmacht, believed that Hitler's foreign policy initiatives would result in another world war with disastrous consequences for the Fatherland. But the Fuehrer was determined he could successfully use Germany's armed might to takeover Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland without war after which he would turn around and eliminate his enemies on the Western Front. While many of his high-ranking officers were shocked to see that he was repeating the disastrous mistake of risking another "two-front" war, which was generally believed to have caused defeat in World War I, the greatest tragedy was that not one of them had the moral courage to openly oppose the fanatic dictator's decision to lead the German people into their second war within twenty years which would likely be another great disaster for their country.

As early as May 30, 1937 Hitler had informed his generals of his intention to go to war, and on May 30, 1938 he ordered the preparation of military plans to make war against the Czechs by the end of September. By August secret plans were being made for a military coup against Hitler even though the participants knew that failure would mean death. The staff officer resistance was centered generally among the more conservative elements of the army and they were prepared to take action against Hitler if France and Britain would take a firm stand against Germany's aggression against Czechoslovakia. But they envisioned a non-violent coup and the restoration of a government not too unlike the monarchy. Beck had been succeeded by his deputy General Franz Halder who, while he shared Beck's convictions about the Nazis and attempted to avoid a war and was aware of the resisters plans, was not willing to use the army against the Fuehrer. As a Christian

he opposed the assassination of Hitler and as an officer his sense of duty prevented his participation in a coup against the State. At what they considered to be the most favorable period for action against Hitler, a number of leading Germans and top military officers feared Hitler was taking Germany into another war which would lead to defeat, but the opposition failed to organize any resistance which had any realistic prospect of being successful. Consequently, no group bears a greater responsibility than the military for the failure to have successfully deposed Adolf Hitler—for it alone had the means and the opportunity which could have saved Germany and the world from its greatest catastrophe.

Perhaps the most consistently active resistance existed within Admiral Canaris's Abwehr where Colonel Oster and Major Helmuth Groscurth organized an active small group which was consistently concerned with implementing a plan to overthrow the Nazis. Several of their more active participants were Captains Friedrich Heinz and Franz Liedig, the Austrian Colonel Erwin von Lahousen, and Hans Bernd Gisevius, a civilian. Oster and Beck, working with Goerdeler, Gisevius, Schacht, Weizsaecker and Nebe activated a thorough plan for a coup which involved, in the event Hitler could not be killed while "resisting," the arrest of the Fuehrer, occupancy of the Reich Chancellery, and a public trial to show Hitler's crimes against Germany. The takeover was to be backed-up by the military commanders of Berlin, Potsdam, and Thuringia, Generals Erwin von Witzleben, Count Erich von Brockdorff-Ahlefeld, and Erich Hoepner, as well as the commanders of three regiments which would be ready to move into the capital.

By taking action at a time of international crisis when they had evidence to believe that the German people were opposed to German involvement in another war, the generals expected public support throughout Germany. Everything depended upon their actions being coordinated with the Western Powers to remove any doubt by the German public that an attack on Czechoslovakia would have meant war with Britain and France. Tragically, as dates for action were set, not only were essential Western assurances not forthcoming, but the appeasement of British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlin on two occasions totally undercut "the premises on which the action depended." It was yet another great blunder by the British and the French as their betrayal of

Czechoslovakia destroyed the most favorable of all opportunities for the overthrow of the greatest evil ever to be inflicted upon mankind!

In early September opposition leaders sent another emissary to London in an effort to avert a threatening tragedy for Germany and the world, but the Chamberlain government could not be deterred from appeasing Hitler. Then the Foreign Office group, led by State Secretary Weizsaecker in contact with Canaris, Beck and Halder, developed plans for pressures on the Nazis both from within by the dissidents, and from without by the West. More urgent messages were sent to London stressing that if the British would issue an "unequivocal statement," the German military would prevent war "and there will no longer be any Hitler." Finally, Erich Kordt saw Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax informing him that Hitler planned to attack Czechoslovakia, believing that Britain and France would not fight, and pleaded that Britain inform Hitler that she would fight if Germany attacked the Czechs. He also informed him that if Hitler then persisted in aggression, he would be told that the German military would rise against the Nazis. Then, the resisters believed, Hitler would be forced to back down, it would be seen as a major foreign policy defeat for the Nazis, and the so-called Fuehrer would be overthrown.

As a consequence of these efforts by the resistance, a strong message was finally sent from London to Berlin. However, British Ambassador Neville Henderson intervened and convinced his government it would only force Hitler into "ill-considered measures" and, furthermore, he had already informed the Germans of such possibilities. So when Chamberlain and Daladier backed down to Hitler and deserted the Czechs with their appeasing compromises, the resistance lost most of its impetus as well as many of its influential participants in the High Command. In effect, Britain and France had given the Nazi's their greatest political victory and the German opposition to Adolf Hitler suffered a defeat from which it would never recover.

After the war, the situation as represented by the conspirators was confirmed by surviving German generals. Hitler had not been prepared to attack Czechoslovakia successfully and, had he launched an assault, and had the British and French been willing to fight, Nazi Germany would have quickly lost the war against the overwhelming combined power of the Czech, French, British, and likely, Russian forces. The generals report that Hitler did not have the strength to break through

the strong Czechoslovakian fortifications and, in any case, they unanimously agreed that Hitler would have lost the war. Then, with the Army General Staff opposed to a "hopeless war," and with appropriate Western political cooperation, Chief of Staff Halder and General Witzleben would have been able to arrest Hitler and impose a new government. Indeed, the resistants repeatedly informed the British government on conditions in Germany, but Neville Chamberlin and his government were determined to avoid war at practically any cost, and their concessions at Munich gave the dictator another year to prepare for war while the vast superiority of Western arms was "dissipated by appeasement and defeatism." By refusing to face up to the opportunity to have ridded Germany of its "upstart Fuehrer" and to have avoided the catastrophe of World War II, Britain and France were directly responsible for one of the world's greatest blunders.

Peter Hoffmann says that Munich dealt "the anti-Hitler opposition a blow from which it could not recover." He also points out that the West had proven that it would not fight and Hitler was able once again to display his "brilliance and infallibility" with more dramatic foreign policy victories. The opposition in Germany believed that the West had literally betrayed them and the greatly reduced strength of the resistance quickly disintegrated in the absence of external support. While the dedicated hard core such as Goerdeler, Beck, Gisevius, Kordt, Oster, Halder, Witzleben, Schulenberg and Schacht remained determined to rid Germany of the Nazis, practically it had become apparent that there was little else they could do. Not only had the Fuehrer's continued success and growing police control further reduced their opportunities and strength, but contacts and organization were greatly reduced by military assignments which separated many of the most important conspirators so that an overthrow by the military became unlikely. That meant the last potential source of adequate power for a successful coup had been eliminated. Instead, it was said that preparations were underway for "the barbaric Teuton legions" of the past to once again launch their aggressions of terror and death against the innocent peoples of Europe and there was little a few scattered "brave but impotent democratic patriots" could do to preserve a democratic Germany and to prevent their Fatherland from being destroyed.

As soon as the Germans took over all of Czechoslovakia without military resistance, and Hitler had successfully contrived to surround most of Poland, he began once again to make threats to use force to gain his Polish demands.

Meanwhile, suddenly and unexpectedly on March 31, 1939, the Chamberlain government finally realized that the folly of appeasement had only increased the likelihood of war and, after deciding that Poland would be a more effective military ally against Germany than Russia, but against the advice of its General Staff, pledged Britain's unrestricted support against aggression to Poland, Greece, Romania and Turkey. Much too late, Britain made a stupefied and catastrophic blunder by suddenly switching from appeasement to a rash commitment which allowed another country to determine whether it should go to war for which it was not prepared, and especially a war in which she could provide little or no aid to assist her allies and, without Russia as an ally, there was no effective way to deter the Nazi dictator from his aggression against Poland. On the other hand, Chamberlain had unreasonably hoped that the stand of Britain and France for Poland would avert war. Instead, it made the Poles even more difficult concerning compromises with Germany and resulted in Hitler's orders for the attack on Poland. Nonetheless, it was a disastrous development for Germany. Now the Fuehrer had boxed himself into the possibility of the dreaded "two-front war." Furthermore, with the probability that the British and the French would fight and with the Soviet Union at his rear, Germany would be trapped between her strongest potential enemies.

Although most world leaders were attempting to avert another disastrous conflict, Hitler had decided that Poland's attitude required the elimination, by military force if necessary, of "any threat from this direction forever." He believed France's "internal crises" and British "cautiousness" would prevent any intervention from the West and that Russia "cannot be expected to be of any use to Poland." In the meantime, Russian negotiations concerning British and French guarantees to Poland, Romania and the Baltic States had bogged down which gave Hitler the opening to remove the danger of a Soviet attack during his assault on Poland. Stalin quickly seized friendly overtures from Germany as the opportunity developed for the Soviets to stand aside while the Nazis and the capitalist democracies destroyed each other. Quickly, the totalitarian dictators signed the Nazi-Soviet pact on August 23, 1939 which divided helpless Poland between them. Hitler now believed his destiny was set for the powerful Wehrmacht to destroy Poland forever, to also crush his hated enemies in the West, then turn

about and seize the vast territories in the East which would make his Third Reich the greatest power on earth.

When Hitler suddenly called off his attack on Poland on August 25, the conspirators were elated believing that the West's commitment to stand with Poland had forced the Nazi dictator to backdown and that their condition for his overthrow had been met. Even Admiral Canaris exclaimed that "The Fuehrer is done for." In the view of the resistance, further aggression would mean certain war with the Allies and they did not believe Hitler would dare to involve Germany in another military conflict with such disastrous prospects. Unexpectedly, they had now become confident that the force of events would turn against the Nazis and that no "direct action," such as an assassination, would be necessary.

But regardless of last-minute worldwide efforts to avoid war, including desperate efforts by Hitler's opponents in Germany to convince higher officials and the generals that another war would be a catastrophe for their country, Hitler ordered his powerfully massed Luftwaffe and Wehrmacht forces to strike Poland without warning on September 1, 1939. Britain and France quickly retaliated by declaring war on Germany. Tragically, the demagogue Hitler had risen from the streets, taken over the nation, and driven Germany into another world war without any effective organized counteraction whatsoever by the German people to preserve freedom within, what had been generally considered to be, a cultured and advanced society. The potential consequences of a second war within twenty-one years should have been so repugnant that war would have been impossible under any circumstances except for defense. The only rational answer is that aggressive resentment, hate and vengeance were so pervasive, and the martial spirit was such an integral part of the Germanic character, that Adolf Hitler was willingly given the popular support by the majority of the German people without which he could never have gained the total police and political control of the state. Once obtained, the opportunities and the number of potential activists remaining with the courage to move against him with any degree of success was strictly limited.

Once Germany's war with Poland, Britain and France had begun, the character of the opposition to Hitler within Germany was radically changed. To win a war a nation traditionally requires the loyalty and unity of its people. Every means of the government, including propaganda, is used to justify and support the nation's

total involvement in war and to develop the patriotism, participation and cooperation of every citizen to insure victory. Not to do so would risk great sacrifice and defeat for the nation with much destruction, suffering and death, if not the loss of liberty. Every citizen is led to believe it is his or her duty to serve and to give their lives, if necessary, to protect and defend their nation regardless of internal politics or the nature of the conflict. In other words, "my country, right or wrong!" Thus, only a dedicated few, or the political fanatics, are willing to risk their freedom, if not their lives, with being branded traitors to their country to oppose the policies and actions of a government in a time of general national sacrifice. Therefore, with their country at war the resisters were deprived of their most powerful ally—the public desire to avoid another war for Germany. Once Hitler had plunged Germany into war in pursuit of his endless ambitions for his Third Reich to conquer the world, the war could not be ended by forcing Germany to surrender which would place her at the mercy of her enemies. And, once again, those who brought it about would be accused of another "stab-in-the-back," the most hated accusation in Germany after World War I. Then the support for, and the likelihood of, the overthrow of Adolf Hitler appeared hopeless.

The German preoccupation with the assault on Poland, however, provided Britain and France with an unique opportunity to successfully defeat Hitler's weakly held forces in the west with their much stronger forces and, as the German generals later admitted, the Allied armies could have easily crossed the Rhine against little resistance and occupied much of Germany. But in spite of their pledges to Poland to attack which would have created certain victory in the west, Britain and France literally hid behind the front of the "Phony War" doing practically nothing for nine months while Hitler defeated the Poles and enlarged his redeployed armor against the Allies. Once again the German resistance was disappointed and demoralized over what they believed to have been their best chance to deal Hitler a crippling military and political blow that would have enabled them to take control of Germany with a new democratic and peaceful government.

With the "Sitzkrieg" (Sit-down War) underway, Hitler attempted to offer peace to Britain which was rejected. But as he began to prepare for the attack in the west, his generals objected that months would be required to build-up enough strength to overcome the superior numbers of France and Britain. But the Fuehrer, confident of his new "Blitzkrieg" (Lightning War) tactics, advanced

his plans for Germany to once again viciously violate the neutrality of tiny Belgium. As a result, the so-called "Zossen Conspiracy" against Hitler at the Army High Command began to develop as the conspirators, having failed to avoid a war, tried to convince the military to stop the war against the West. As Field Marshal Walther Brauchitsch and General Franz Halder saw it, they either had to oust Hitler or prepare for a war with the more powerful West which Germany would not win. First, however, an agreement with the Allies had to be reached, otherwise, the overthrow of Hitler could result in a harsh occupation of Western forces in Germany. The Generals also realized that reasonable terms would be difficult to negotiate after Belgian and Dutch neutrality had been violated. So they renewed contacts with Britain and new initiatives were taken via Switzerland and the Vatican to stop the war before an irreversible conflict could get underway. It had become apparent that only the military possessed the necessary force to remove the Nazis from power, and as Baron von Weizsacker summed it up, "Our only hope for salvation lies in a military coup d'etat."

Obviously, with major forces being massed for attack at the Western Front, only the Home Forces would be available for an attempt to seize the Nazi government. Therefore, the headquarters of the Army Command and the General Staff at Zossen became the center of any potential conspiratorial effort to depose Hitler, for taking over the government, and for stopping the war with Britain and France. Halder and Brauchitsch had found little confidence among the front-line generals for the success of an attack in the west, and Brauchitsch agreed that if he could not convince Hitler to call off the assault, he would join an attempt to oust him. On November 3, 1939 Halder notified Beck and Goerdeler to stand by for potential action. At last, the plotters believed that they could save Germany and they began to put together names for a post-Hitler government. As might have been expected, in conference Hitler raged at the "defeatism" of his timid generals, Brauchitsch retreated and the so-called "Zossen Conspiracy" collapsed before it could begin. Once again the dictator had cowed the military into submission and forced the conspirators to cowardly back down.

On November 8 just after Hitler had left the Buergerbraukeller at Munich, a bomb exploded which killed seven and injured sixty-three persons. While the Nazis blamed it on the British Secret Service, it is still unknown whether it was a serious attempt to kill the Fuehrer, or if the Nazis staged it in an effort to inflame

the war fever of the German people with the belief that the British had tried to kill their Fuehrer? It is known that the man who supposedly set off the bomb admitted he had been set-up to do the job by German officials and, it is believed, he was never brought to trial for the incident so as not to implicate the Gestapo. Still it demonstrated that the elimination of the dictator would have been possible had more attempts been made by the resisters.

In a meeting with his generals on November 23, the Fuehrer placed his schemes and the fate of Germany into the fickle hands of destiny. The former corporal revealed his irrevocable decision to destroy Britain and France saying, "We can oppose Russia only when we are free in the west." And shamefully, none of the generals posed a single objection either to the attack or over the violent breach of Belgian and Dutch neutrality. Once again, as with the threats against the Czechs and before the attack on Poland, not a single one of Germany's military leaders had the courage to even make the attempt to speak up or act against a war for which their country was not believed to be prepared, let alone the violation of the established law of civilized nations and of universally accepted moral principles.

When the resisters learned of Hitler's plans to invade Denmark and Norway efforts were renewed to get rid of the Nazi leader and they attempted to obtain British agreement to peaceful terms for an anti-Hitler government after his ouster. However, they insisted that the German people would require that the annexed areas of Germanic people must remain a part of Germany. They also represented that if Germany "was overrun by the Bolsheviks," it would be considered to be a worse fate than the continued rule of the Nazis. Unfortunately, Western leaders believed that the absence of any evidence of a successful effort to oust Hitler gave them little confidence in the resistance movement in Germany. They found little reason to believe that the "so-called conspirators" were worthy of encouragement and support, and while they listened to their emissaries, they not only largely ignored their pleas, but since many of the resistants held positions in the German government and military, they were even considered by some to be representatives of the Nazis who were attempting to uncover acts of treason.

Against the advice of most of his generals, the Fuehrer went ahead with his aggressive plans which brought him first his surprising and quick conquest of Denmark and Norway, followed by his spectacular defeat of the British and French in one of history's most daring and brilliant military victories which again

completely demoralized the opposition in Germany. Generally the public abroad was astounded, the German people were ecstatic, and the German generals were shown again to have been wrong. Suddenly, the Nazi ex-Corporal had become the most brilliant politician and military strategist in the history of the Fatherland. Almost all of Europe and much of the world had become frightened and vulnerable before such a powerful threat of Nazi aggression. It was believed that everything had gone the Fuehrer's way, Nazism would never be stronger, and Hitler thought himself to be invincible. For those who opposed what Germany had become and were willing to risk their lives to rid Germany of its tyrant, the future appeared to be hopeless.

But the undaunted bravery of the Royal Air Force in the Battle of Britain soon showed the world that the Nazi war machine was not what it appeared to be. Also, they forced Hitler to believe he had to remove the threat of an attack on his rear by the Soviets in order to concentrate his full forces to invade and overcome Great Britain. Then the surprise Nazi attack struck the Soviets on June 22, 1941 and Stalin's unprepared forces were annihilated. Within three weeks the Germans were only 200 miles from the Soviet capital preparing for its capture. In one of the war's greatest blunders, instead of undertaking the certain capture of Moscow which could have ended the conflict with Russia, Hitler foolishly decided the Russians were defeated, split off part of the powerful German center forces which were directed to capture Leningrad in the north and the Ukraine to the south. His decision caused the first great controversy among the generals of the High Command who argued that the drive should continue on to capture Moscow before winter when Stalin could rally his disorganized and demoralized forces to defend the city. The disagreement became "the most severe crisis" within the German military since the war began. The Fuehrer's gross error had caused the German attack to stall in the suburbs of Moscow and the invincible Wehrmacht began its first retreat. Still the fanatic Fuehrer refused to permit his generals to withdraw and re-group. Instead, the message runner of World War I took over the command of the Wehrmacht and, from that date forward, the German forces would never again attain a major victory—only the temporary delay of defeat to the useless sacrifice of millions of human beings in the most vicious conflict the world had ever known. It was an important turning point of the war which would mark the beginning of the end for the Third Reich.

The conflict between the generals and Hitler grew as military setbacks increased and more commanders were fired. Although aware that Germany's fate had become questionable, many of the generals believed that loyalty was necessary to prevent the Communist destruction of their country. Others were convinced that the need for action against Hitler was greater than ever to effect peace and to save Germany. Defeat and casualties substantially increased discontent and soon activities against Hitler were resumed among the military and civilian plotters. Recognizing the urgency to move against the Nazis without delay if reasonable terms for Germany were to be obtained before Germany's gains had been lost, Hassell, Popitz, Oster, Hans von Dohnanyi of the Abwehr and Chief of the Home Army General Friedrich Olbricht, met in Berlin determined to make use of the military's reaction against Hitler's insane leadership. They were also fully aware of the difficulty of their position since Roosevelt and Churchill's anti-German propaganda had refused to make any distinction between the Nazis and the German people. The conspirators believed that the determination of the Western leaders to destroy the German nation had consistently made it practically impossible for them to build the support and action necessary to overthrow Adolf Hitler and form a non-Nazi government in Germany as a necessary basis for peace.

In the meantime, the war against the Russians continued in all its fury where the most active military opposition developed among the officers of Field Marshal Fedor von Bock's Army Group Center on the Moscow front. Major General Henning von Tresckow led an opposition group including Fabian von Schlabrendorff, Count Hans von Hardenburg, and Count Heinrich von Lehndorff which had sought to capture Hitler, but found him too well guarded. Furthermore, they concluded that the high-ranking officers could not be counted on and, if Hitler was to be successfully eliminated, it would be up to the younger civilians in the military to kill him. But the plotters in Berlin were not ready to attempt such desperate action and settled for a highly unrealistic and naive scheme for military leaders to simply refuse to obey the Fuehrer after which the Home Army would takeover Berlin, remove Hitler from power, and banish the Nazi Party. However, Field Marshal von Witzleben convinced the conspirators that only "direct action" could be expected to succeed. Then a plan was developed by Ambassador von Hassell for a post-war government and General Ludwig Beck was recognized as the leader of the anti-Hitler opposition in

Germany. It was an unfortunate choice since Beck, while a dedicated and valiant opponent, failed to provide "the determined will for risk and action which was required to overcome the almost unlimited power of a totalitarian state."

Although Hitler's continued simultaneous assault on both Moscow and the Caucasus, against the advice of his generals, initially renewed some success, neither force possessed adequate strength to maintain its drive as the Russian resistance became increasingly stronger. While the war against the Soviet Union was turned around at Moscow, Germany lost the most important battle in the East at Stalingrad that became the greatest defeat of German arms in history. To all but the fanatical Nazis, it was apparent that Germany would lose the war. Also, the Americans and the British had landed in North Africa and Rommel's Africa Corps was in retreat. Then Roosevelt and Churchill met at Casablanca and adopted the controversial "Unconditional Surrender" policy which literally shattered the German resistance. Since before the war, Hitler's opponents had made many efforts at great risk to warn the West and to gain its cooperation and support without success. Then came the Casablanca total surrender declaration which they considered to have been the death-blow to the resistance in Germany. Most Germans believed victory was no longer possible, but it was necessary to continue to fight to save the Fatherland from total destruction from both the Allies and the Soviets. Now there was no choice but to fight until death and the plotters were convinced that the surrender policy would result in Hitler's determination to fight to the complete destruction of Germany and the triumph of Soviet Communism in Central Europe.

Nonetheless, in 1943 Hitler's opponents in the military finally decided that an attempt had to be made to kill Adolf Hitler which was organized as Operation FLASH by Tresckow and his associates at Army Group Center in Russia. Young Colonel Baron von Boeslager and his officers volunteered to use their cavalry regiment to eliminate the dictator, and success might have been obtained had not commanding Field Marshal von Kluge, like other ranking commanders, refused approval believing that the Fuehrer could be removed by means other than assassination. But Tresckow was determined to save Germany from further disaster and, after failing to gain an opportunity to have an explosive set-off in Hitler's presence, managed to successfully smuggle two bombs inside champagne bottles onto Hitler's plane. But as the conspirators believed they had at last ridded

Germany of its demonic leader, and happily began to prepare to takeover the control of Germany, they learned that the bombs had failed to detonate. The effort was beneficial, however, as the plotters learned that their forces available for the take-over would likely have been inadequate and the plot for seizing control of the government would have failed.

Beginning as far back as 1940, Count Helmuth von Moltke, great-grandnephew of the famous Field Marshal, had formed a representative group of influential Germans called the "Kreisau Circle." It included such well-known persons as Count York von Wartenburg, Adam von Trott zu Solz, Theodor Steltzer, Count Friedrich von der Schulenburg, Count Ulrich von Schwerin-Schwanenfeld, Horst von Einsiedel, Hans Bernd von Haeften, Catholic Fathers Delp and Roesch, Social Democrats Leber, Reichwein and Haybach, Evangelical Pastors Eugen Gerstenmaier and Harald Poelchau, Trade Unionist Jakob Kaiser, as well as other conservatives, landowners, liberals, socialists and unionists, which debated and discussed the problems of a post-war Germany and Europe. Three major meetings were held in early 1942, the fall of 1942 and the spring of 1943. The Circle was, however, dominated by a Christian intellectual ethic that did not permit the advocacy of murder, even for the brutal Nazis, but believed that Nazism would die of its own excesses. Nevertheless, the influence of their conclusions was substantial in Germany and Terence Prittie described it as having "produced the moral and intellectual ideas which gave" the military conspirators the final inspiration to rise above their long series of discouraging misfortunes to do whatever was necessary to save Germany from destruction.

The resisters next undertook to develop their limited resources and opportunities to successfully attempt further efforts to assassinate Hitler. Plans for a coup were completed by July 1943 for a takeover of Berlin, agreed objectives were set, support and cooperation of key generals would be sought, and planning for a new assassination attempt was begun. All action, however, was soon disastrously set-back by the sudden arrest of key members of the resistance such as von Dohnanyi, Pastor Bonhoeffer, and Josef Mueller of the Abwehr. They were accused of having made contact with the enemy through the Vatican. Fortunately, Admiral Canaris was able to deflect the inquiry, but it damaged the position of General Oster who had served the important role of managing the organized resistance, and he was removed from his influential post at the

Abwehr. However, Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg took over the all-important position of Chief of Staff at the General Army Office under General Olbricht, which proved to be a highly fortunate development for the resistance.

Working closely with Staff Officer Ulrich von Oertzen and directed by General Treskow, Count Stauffenberg gave first priority to organizing plans for an effective takeover at Berlin. It was decided that it would be necessary to command the required military forces to occupy centers of communication, utility and transportation so as to control all essential governmental functions immediately after the assassination. The cooperation of the police was arranged through the support of Count Wolf Heinrich von Helldorf, President of Berlin Police, and SS Obergruppenfuehrer Nebe, in charge of the Berlin Criminal Police. Control of the major elements of government for the first twenty-four hours was essential or all would be lost, and by the end of 1943 the patriots believed that the necessary requisites for the success of Operation VALKYRIE were ready. Their associates included important commanders of key military posts in the Berlin area such as General Friedrich Olbricht, deputy commander of the Home Army, and General Paul von Hase, City Commandant for Berlin, and it was believed that adequate armed units were available to complete essential assignments. The name of General Fritz Fromm, commander of the Home Army, was pre-signed by the conspirators ordering army reserve units to disarm the SS in the Berlin area. Field Marshal Erwin von Witzleben, who would be the Army Commander-in-Chief under the new regime, pre-signed an order which would immediately, after the assassination, place SS control under the new regime and subordinate all political power to the armed forces. Even the "quick justice" including the execution of Nazi leaders was agreed upon, but opportunities for the would-be assassins to gain access to Hitler remained extremely limited. The greatest problem for the resisters involved the difficulty in finding a suitable and capable patriot who was willing to sacrifice his life and also could gain access to the Fuehrer at the right place and the right time.

Several attempts to take action against the dictator had failed. Lieutenant Colonel Freiherr von Boeselager offered to attack Hitler's headquarters but the resistance was unable to arrange the transfer of his regiment from Russia. Lieutenant Werner von Haeften was willing to assassinate Hitler, but as a Christian he could not risk killing innocent bystanders. Just as Major Freiherr

von Gersdorff attempted to kill both the Nazi Leader and himself. Hitler departed before the bombs could be set. General Helmuth Stieff and aides Major Kuhn and Lieutenant von Hagen agreed to make an attempt, but they failed to get entrance to a High Command conference. Stieff then, with the assistance of von Stauffenberg, arranged for Captain Axel von dem Bussche and Captain Ewald von Kleist to kill the Fuehrer while demonstrating a new uniform, but several display appointments were postponed. Fabian von Schlabrendorff claimed that he and other officers made several unsuccessful efforts to get Hitler to visit various locations on the Soviet Front when they planned to kill him with their pistols. Soon afterwards the resistance was staggered to learn that the Gestapo had discovered a "rebellion" was being planned in the Army and that Heinrich Himmler was waiting to entrap Beck, Goerdeler and others hostile to the Nazis.

But time was running out for the conspirators. The war with the Soviet Union was rapidly disintegrating and the forthcoming Second Front in the West presented the resistants with the possibility of an early defeat and the unwelcome conditions of an unconditional surrender. The plotters were also losing valuable participants to reassignments and arrests. Ludwig Beck never regained his strength and abilities after an illness and co-conspirator General Kurt von Hammerstein had died. The unexpected removal of Admiral Canaris from his post in February 1944 was a critical loss which deprived the plotters of their main source of information. At the same time as resources became more limited, the Gestapo increased its exposure of plots and the arrest of participants, the Allies successfully invaded Normandy, and Adolf Hitler withdrew to his fortified command posts. Meanwhile, Stauffenberg had assumed the coordination of the resistance and questioned whether a coup d'etat might still benefit Germany politically? Treseckow pointed out that although the political situation had greatly changed, it was necessary to overthrow the Nazis to show the world that there were decent and honorable Germans with the courage to risk their lives against Hitler and to end the Nazi control of Germany.

While powerful and overwhelmingly superior Allied forces had stormed ashore against rapidly decreasing resistance in Normandy, and the Wehrmacht was engaged in desperate delaying actions in Russia, it was apparent to the conspirators that Germany's armed forces could not hold out much longer and Germany would be invaded by her enemies. Then, there would be nothing left

with which a new government could bargain with the West. Since immediate action was urgent, Colonel von Boeselager was rushed to see Field Marshal Guenther von Kluge as the commander in the west, in the hope that Field Marshal Rommel could be convinced to permit the Allied forces to pass through German lines in Normandy, so as to occupy Germany before it would be overrun by the "bolsheviks" from the East. Kluge responded that a breakthrough by the Allies could not be prevented in any case.

Fortunately for the conspirators, Stauffenberg was named Chief of Staff to General Fromm, commander of the critical Home Army, whose forces would be essential for a coup to succeed. From that key post, the young resistant was able to coordinate plans for Operation VALKYRIE and to exchange views with top military leaders such as Fromm and General Kurt Zeitzler, Army Chief of Staff, who sympathized in principle, if not regarding specific action. Further efforts to eliminate the dictator had failed. Colonel von Breitenbuch was willing to shoot Hitler at a conference but found his target closely guarded by the SS. Two more assassination attempts had been scheduled but unexpected developments prevented their execution. Finally, the dedicated Staufenberg decided that if Hitler was to be killed before it was too late, he would have to do it! He was confident that the troops in the Berlin area, who generally hated the SS and, due to constant Allied raids and new defeats at the front, were fed-up with the war and would cooperate, even though the commander Field Marshal Fromm could not be counted on. Unfortunately, however, Stauffenberg made the critical mistake of assuming the conflicting responsibility for both the assassination and the direction of the coup which would follow.

With Stauffenberg in the key position with the Home Army it was believed that Operation VALKYRIE was set for action and Goerdeler had prepared a Provisional Government to serve after Hitler's overthrow with himself as Chancellor, General Ludwig Beck was to be placed in command of the Armed Forces with Field Marshal von Witzleben as commander of the Wehrmacht. The Minister of War was to be General Friedrich Olbricht or General Erich Hoepner with Count von Stauffenburg to serve as Secretary of State for War. Among numerous other conspirators, Ulrich von Hassell was listed as Minister for Foreign Affairs and General von Treskow as Chief of Police.

The courageous young Stauffenberg first made an attempt on the Fuehrer's life at a conference at Obersalzberg on July 11, 1944. He was ready to set his bomb off when General Olbricht persuaded him to wait until Himmler would be present. Disappointed over a lost chance, the plotters decided to proceed in future without preconditions. Shortly afterwards Stauffenburg had another chance at the Rastenburg headquarters, but when the Count left the room to warn Olbricht the bomb was ready, Hitler unexpectedly departed. Finally, on July 20 another chance arose for Stauffenberg at a conference at Hitler's Rastenburg headquarters. He placed his briefcase with the bomb under the conference table and left the room for "a telephone call" as fate would once again intervene. The briefcase was either moved or fell behind the heavy solid leg of the conference table which blocked the full force of the explosion. Unfortunately, the Nazi demagogue continued to be saved by fate and blunders which prevented the end of the war causing additional untold death, destruction and suffering.

When Stauffenberg heard the bomb go off and saw the building collapse, he had every reason to believe that the dictator had been killed. However, as the young Colonel was flying back to the waiting conspirators in Berlin, they received a garbled message about Hitler's fate. Then, as Hitler's headquarters blocked communications from Rastenburg for two and a half hours, invaluable time was lost as Generals Olbricht and Hoepner delayed action until Hitler's death could be confirmed. Furthermore, when Stauffenburg returned to Berlin he was greatly shocked to find that Generals Beck and Witzleben had just arrived and little action had been taken to effect the coup almost four hours after the explosion.

Still the coup could have been pulled off except that, as had so often been the case before, a top commander failed to possess the conviction and the courage to take the desperate action required to save Germany from destruction. Again the brave attempt to kill the Fuehrer had failed for reasons beyond the control of the conspirators. But as Terrence Prittie observes, the failure to order Operation VALKYRIE to begin in the confusion after the attempt was made was one of the greatest blunders perpetrated by the conspiracy. Furthermore, Fromm actually called Rastenburg and confirmed that Hitler was still alive and refused to take any action. Stauffenberg arrested Fromm, among others, and placed Hoepner in command of the Home Army. Even at that late date, orders were given for troops to enter into Berlin and Count Helldorff placed his Berlin Police into action.

Stauffenberg also telephoned General Heinrich von Stuelpnagel, Military Governor of France, who ordered the arrest of all SS men in Paris, and Beck called von Kluge at Headquarters on the Western Front who could not decide what to do.

Back in Berlin, the coup would still have likely succeeded had the anti-Nazis's expeditiously handled the arrangements for VALKYRIE, but again fate intervened against them. Meanwhile, Propaganda Minister Josef Goebbels had convinced Major Otto Remer, commander of the key Home Guard battalion, that the Fuehrer was still alive and the garrison troops were used to arrest the conspirators rather than to help the takeover of the government. The uprising never got under way and was soon crushed with typical Nazi brutality. General Fromm, having refused to cooperate and seeing that the takeover would fail, had General Olbricht, Colonel Stauffenberg, Colonel Mertz von Quirnheim and Lieutenant Werner von Haeften shot on the spot so they could not reveal that he had known about the plot for months. General Beck was assisted to shoot himself and General Hoepner and others were arrested. After Hitler told the German people that "A very small clique of ambitious, irresponsible...senseless and stupid officers have concocted a plot to eliminate me, and with me, the staff of the High Command of the Wehrmacht...It is a gang of criminal elements which will be destroyed without mercy," and later added, "They must all be hanged like cattle." William L. Shirer reported that "the only serious one (revolt) ever made against Hitler in the eleven and a half years of the Third Reich, had been snuffed out in eleven and a half hours."

The furious Fuehrer retaliated against the German people with a vicious and bloody vengeance. Charging that the attempt on his life was treason against the state, every person that was known or suspected to be either opposed to the war or to the Nazi determination to lead Germany to destruction rather than surrender was to be ruthlessly eliminated. More than 7,000 persons were arrested and almost 5,000 of them, including innocent relatives, friends and acquaintances of Hitler's enemies, either real or imagined, were killed. Many of the plotters, such as Generals Beck and Treskow, committed suicide, and while they wanted the war to end to save Germany, Field Marshals von Kluge and Rommel were implicated in the plot and they killed themselves. Field Marshal von Witzleben, Generals Hoepner, Stieff and von Hase, and junior officers Hagen, Klausing,

Bernardis, and Count von Wartenburg, as friends of Stauffenberg, were convicted in the infamous "People's Court" and hung. Goerdeler was sentenced to death but not executed until he and Popitz were killed in early 1945. Other anti-Nazis executed for "complicity" were Count von Schulenburg, Ambassador Hassel, General Fellgiebel, Count von Moltke, Trott zu Solz, General Fritz Lindemann, Colonel von Boeselager, Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Colonel Georg Hansen, Count von Helldorff, Dr. Jens Peter Jessen, Otto Kiep, Dr. Carl Langbehn, Julius Neber, Major von Leonrod, Wilhelm Leuschner, Artur Nebe, Professor Adold Reichwein, Count Berthold von Stauffenbeg (brother of Klaus), General Fritz Thiele, General Freiherr von Thuengen, Count von Bernstorff, Klaus Bonhoeffer, Albert Haushofer, and many others.

The trials lasted well into 1945. General Fromm was convicted of "cowardice" and was shot. Admiral Canaris and Colonel Oster were sentenced to death and executed. General Halder, Dr. Schacht and Fabian Schlabrendorff were imprisoned. General von Stuelpnagel was strangled to death in prison and, unfortunately, his accomplice Colonel Caesar von Hofacker while under torture before his death, mentioned the complicity of Kluge, Rommel and General Hans Speidel. Many other high ranking officers were imprisoned and killed by the Nazis. After the dictator had ruthlessly murdered "disloyal" elements of the officer corps, most of the remaining generals feared for their lives and repledged their loyalty to the Fuehrer and to "the unity of the officers corps and men of the Army." Field Marshals Gerd von Rundstedt, Walther von Brauchitsch and General Heinz Guderian were among the generals that dishonored themselves by presiding at the Military Court of Honor that expelled the arrested military resistants from the Army, many of whom were executed. It was said that the honor of the Prussian Officer Corps had "disgraced itself with cowardice and shame" in the face of Nazi gangsterism! Shirer called it the fulfillment of the Germanic tradition which "made blind obedience to temporal rulers the highest virtue of Germanic man and put a premium on servility." After the war General Guenther Blumentritt said that at least half of the German Army, as well as the people themselves, considered the acts against Hitler and the war to have been traitorous.

The failure of VALKYRIE not only eliminated the last possibility for Hitler's overthrow but it meant there would be no further hope that the disastrous "Gotterdamerung" of Germany could be avoided. It also removed any chance

that the war might have ended before Germany was overrun by Soviet and Allied troops with Russia taking over the political control of Central Europe backed up by the massive occupation of the Red Army. Germany's traditional position as the strongest power in Central Europe was destroyed and Soviet Communism quickly filled the vacuum and acquired the status of a world political power. However, the Soviets were far from the military power that western compromise and appeasement, if not treachery, had made it appear to be. While the Soviet Union possessed a huge manpower which had successfully defeated the German Wehrmacht aided by masses of Western aid and materiel, it was in fact, an exhausted giant at the end of the war without the will nor the means to enforce the zealous ambitions of Josef Stalin. The new "Soviet Superpower" had been created by the aggressiveness and brutal excesses of another fanatic dictatorship as threatening and as dangerous for world democracy and freedom as Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany.

As noted, very few of the important conspirators survived the war. Ewald von Kleist, Admiral Canaris, Hans Oster, Henning von Tresckow, Erwin von Witzleben, Carl Goerdeler, Helmuth Stieff, Julius Leber, Claus von Stauffenberg and Peter Yorck von Wartenburg, Adam von Trott zu Solz, among others, were executed. Ludwig Beck and others committed suicide, and only Ernst Niekisch, though paralyzed, and Fabian von Schlabrendorff, among the major conspirators, survived. They believe that among the causes which led to the popular acceptance of Adolf Hitler were the well established German traits of traditional military and civil obedience. They also claim that "spiritual nihilism," which prevailed in Europe after the industrial revolution, destroyed idealistic and moral beliefs which paved the way for "absolutism and dictatorship." And that Hitler's political platform to throw off the "shame of Versailles," to save Germany from Communism, and to provide "work and bread" for an economically destitute Germany "was irresistible." Numerous German leaders had assumed that once Hitler had gained a position of power, he could be undercut and destroyed by insoluble problems which would destroy the Nazis and their "upstart Fuehrer." According to Fabian von Schlabrendorff, the tragedy of Adolf Hitler occurred fundamentally as a result of the combination of "terror and habit."

From the beginning, what were the realistic possibilities that a coup against Hitler and the overthrow of the Nazi regime in Germany could have succeeded?

Was it a critical blunder when the Allies failed to either recognize or support the German opposition to Adolf Hitler? Was Franklin Roosevelt's blunder of unconditional surrender the major reason that Hitler was not overthrown? As previously pointed out, the President had forbidden American contact with and support of the German opposition to Hitler. He apparently believed them to be a threat to his policy of "unconditional surrender," and considered them to be "unimportant and ineffective," and no more than a small group of "militarists and reactionaries." Churchill, largely dependent upon American aid for the war, could not be expected to risk any serious conflict with the political American President. But General William Donovan, head of the American S.O.S., was among others who took the resistance seriously and recommended American help which Roosevelt ignored. After the war German resistance participants charged outright that Roosevelt's unconditional surrender had created insurmountable difficulties for a successful overthrow of Hitler.

Was there ever any realistic possibility that the West would have accepted the major conditions which the resistants considered to be essential for the overthrow of the Nazis? Allen Dulles contended that the conspirators were totally unrealistic with their expectation that the Allies would join the Germans in a "defensive front" against the Soviets, and called it an "obsession" which gravely undercut their credibility and removed the possibility of aid and support by Washington and London. Goerdeler even suggested a "peace plan" in mid-1943 which called for the cessation of the bombing of Berlin, cancellation of Allied landings on the continent, no invasion of the Reich, retention of the German peoples of Austria and the Sudetenland, annexation of the South Tyrol from Italy, and an independent status for Alsace-Lorraine. Anthony Eden, in fact, had put those who sought change in Germany on notice by saying that "no one will believe them until they have taken active steps to rid themselves of their present regime."

An earlier VALKYRIE would have had a much better chance of success. Its plans had been worked out by Stauffenberg by August 1943 with key "opposition contacts" set throughout the army. In addition to much of the top leadership of the Home Army, at the High Command there was General Eduard Wagner as Quarter-Master General; General Helmuth Stieff, Chief of the Organization Department; General Georg Thomas, Chief of the Economics and Armaments Branch; General Fritz Lindemann, Chief of the Ordnance

Department; General Erich Fellgiebel, Chief of Communications; and Colonel Alexis von Roenne, Chief of Foreign Armies Department. At the Western Front there was General Karl von Stuelpnagel, Military Commander of Paris; General Freiherr von Falkenhausen as Military Governor of Belgium; and Field Marshals Guenther von Kluge and Erwin Rommel who were sympathetic regarding the objective of the conspiracy but not with the means. Others that were involved in varying degrees of opposition to Adolf Hitler were General Hans Speidel, Chief of Staff to General Erwin Rommel; Reichsminister Dr. Dropmuller; Gauleiter Kayffmann of Hamburg; Dr. Karl Strolin, Lord Mayor of Stuttgart; Constantin von Neurath, former diplomat; General Baron Leo Gayr von Schweppenburg, commanding a Panzer Group in Normandy; Vice Admiral Friedrich Ruge, Rommel's Naval Advisor; Colonel Finckh, Quartermaster-General for the west; and Gen. Baron Heinrich von Luettwitz, commander of the 2nd Panzer Division in Normandy.

It is certain that several plots on the life of Hitler would have succeeded had fate not unpredictably intervened. The attempts by Bussche, Kleist, and even Staffenburg in 1943, were well planned and executed and had every prospect of success. Could VALKYRIE really have been a success? Actually, it was a brilliantly conceived and executed assassination attempt by Staffenberg, and it would have succeeded had not fate, once again, saved the demonic Nazi dictator. Surely, if the briefcase had not been accidentally pushed behind the table support Hitler would have been killed. Unfortunately, Generals Beck, Hoepner and Olbricht committed a vital blunder when they failed to take immediate action with the available Home Army troops to seize the major elements of government and communication under the representation that the Fuehrer was dead. VALKYRIE still could have been successful even though Hitler had not been killed. Another fatal blunder was committed when the key element of the takeover was based on action by a Home Guard battalion under a commander who was a professional soldier and not a dedicated conspirator. If Commanding General Fromm of the Home Guard had been of stronger character the putsch could have succeeded, and while the able leadership of Admiral Canaris and Colonel Oster would have assured the success of the coup, they were not called by the older "out of touch" men who failed to demonstrate the will for the effective action needed to oust the Nazi Fuehrer.

Another major effort by the resistance had involved the hopeless belief that they might negotiate peace "over Hitler's head" by making the West believe that it would be in their best interest for Germany to continue to exist in the center of Europe. They much preferred to deal with the West, but in the absence of assistance from the West, they were even willing to work with the Soviets to create a non-Nazi Germany. Doubt continues in many circles whether there was ever any realistic basis for hope that either the West or the Soviets would negotiate with the resistance? Unquestionably, the best opportunity the conspirators had for a successful coup was in September 1938 when Hitler prepared to make war against Czechoslovakia. Neither the German people nor the military wanted war and Generals Halder and Witzleben had ample military forces in the Berlin area for a successful coup. Not only would World War II have been avoided but Germany would have been saved and world Communism would have been contained. However, Neville Chamberlain's appeasement destroyed the world's greatest chance for peace and freedom to prevail over Nazism and Communism.

The fact cannot be avoided that the German people themselves, including the resistants, must bear the basic responsibility for the uninterrupted horror which Adolf Hitler and the German Nazi party inflicted upon the world. Included in the more than fifty million human beings whose lives were sacrificed in World War II, it is estimated that the Nazis actually murdered as many as eleven million persons. Five million were classified as "the unfitted" (criminals, homosexuals, the infirm and the insane), forced laborers and military prisoners (mainly Russian), in addition to the six million Jews killed in the Holocaust. For whatever reason, it is a fact that the German people willingly gave Adolf Hitler the opportunity to seize power in Germany. They failed to prevent his takeover of the German government. Even the minority of Germans who opposed the Nazi's gangster tactics refused to cooperate and consolidate their political ambitions behind the major political parties to defeat Hitler. Instead of supporting the best interest of the state by opposing the dictatorial control of Germany by the Communists or the Nazis, too many political parties continued to seek their own objectives which made it impossible for democratic government to prevail. Ten different parties polled a million or more votes and, as each party worked against the others, the nation was hopelessly divided by political chaos.

In the final analysis, the people of Germany rejected their opportunity for a civilized democratic government. They intentionally supported either Communist or Nazi terrorism to the point where it became a choice of one or the other. Germany's ultimate doom in the worldwide apocalyptic Armageddon was determined by the people of Germany themselves when they placed a higher value upon the restoration of order by the violation of human rights at the cost of their own loss of freedom and democracy. And even in the face of national destruction by the most evil and barbaric government in the history of mankind, they failed to complete the one action which might have restored some degree of respect and decency for the German people. It is an irrefutable fact that the German people will forever bear the fundamental responsibility for Adolf Hitler and for the murder, suffering and destruction which his Nazi Germany so brutally and aggressively inflicted upon so much of mankind.

Chapter 12

The Allied Assault on Germany

The Battle of Normandy was the dramatic and climatic Allied victory that forced the sudden and unexpected collapse of the German forces in western Europe. After many weeks of furious and stalemated struggle, once the breakout was forced at Avranches and the Falaise Gap was closed, the equivalent of more than forty German divisions had been literally eliminated. The Wehrmacht lost more than 400,000 men with over 200,000 killed or wounded, and over 1,300 tanks, 1,500 guns, 20,000 vehicles and 3,500 aircraft destroyed or captured. As the remnants of the battered German forces fled across France for the safety of the Siegfried Line, they could get only twenty-four tanks and sixty guns across the Seine River. After such a totally disastrous defeat of the German army in the West and the Soviet advances in the East, the Allies had every reason to believe that the end of the war would surely come before Christmas 1944.

But the inexcusable Allied blunder in failing to close the gap at Falaise had prevented the surrender of a substantial part of the German forces which were enabled to escape back to Germany and to continue to put up a strong defense which prolonged the war. Nonetheless, the Normandy campaign was one of the largest and most decisive battles in military history. There had never been such a massive amphibious assault and, for the first time, aerial warfare played the most dominating role ever employed in a military operation. The results of the campaign had been so extensive and had so greatly surpassed the expectations of the Allies that it was generally believed that the Germans could not possibly hold out much longer.

The SHAEF pre-invasion forecast had called for Paris to be reached in 120 days but the rapid pursuit of the retreating Germans by the American and British forces had covered as much as 195 miles in four days. Paris was liberated and objectives were reached which had been expected to require up to twelve months after the invasion. While the First Canadian Army struggled to clear the channel ports against determined German resistance other Allied Forces were able to race across France with little opposition. But as the supply lines stretched all the way from the beaches and Cherbourg, progress began to bog down from a shortage of fuel and ammunition. Thus, while substantially ahead of the time schedule and just as the German forces appeared to be completely defeated, logistical support became crucially inadequate for a sustained drive powerful enough to force a quick end to the war.

Pre-invasion planning had assumed that by D+90 German resistance would require the strength of at least sixty American and British divisions to force their way across the Seine and that a strong logistical build-up would be necessary to overcome the Siegfried Line to invade Germany. However, once the Allied forces had found themselves able to reach southern Holland and the Germany border with Belgium, it became critically important that the port of Antwerp be captured where the vast quantities of men and resources needed for the final assault into Germany could be assembled at the earliest possible date.

While the Normandy campaign had ended spectacularly with the great American end-run through Brittany and across the Seine with the dramatic liberation of Paris and Patton's dash up near to Germany's borders, the leadership of Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery's British and Canadian forces had been both troublesome and disappointing. Clearly they had fought bravely, if not aggressively, in holding German armor on the Allied left flank which contributed greatly to the dramatic American breakout on the right. But Montgomery had failed to obtain his major assigned objectives to capture Caen and to gain control of sites for Allied airfields beyond the city. The concentration of German armor on his front was due partly to the failure of his initial attacks and partly to the hedgerow terrain in front of the American forces which was unfavorable for massed tanks. The over-cautious Monty, although handicapped by Britain's manpower shortage, had consistently failed to win an advantage over the German forces opposite him, even with an overwhelming supply of tanks, men and weapons, as well as the

heaviest tactical air assaults used in the war. Furthermore, his unsuccessful efforts to breakout at Caen brought about a series of difficulties and dissensions between the British commander and the American generals which developed into one of the most unfortunate and longest controversies of the war. The fact is that the "Hero of El Alamein," sulking over the appointment of an American as Supreme Commander, not only failed as a successful commander, but also as a cooperative partner in a brutal struggle against a relentless enemy.

Both British and American associates had become well aware that Montgomery possessed a contentious egocentric character with a widely established background of difficult relationships with others. Noted British historian Max Hastings observed that throughout Montgomery's military career "a worm of self-destruction in the austere, awkward little man in the beret caused him to disparage the contribution of his peers, shamelessly to seize the credit for the achievement of others, and to rewrite history of his own battlefield planning to conform with the reality of what took place." Hastings also added that many of Monty's officers were unaware of "the dark side of his character, the conceit and moments of pettiness, the indifference to truth where it reflected upon himself, and the capacity for malice," and concluded that "Montgomery's subsequent attempts to pretend that the Normandy battle developed entirely in accordance with his own plans have distorted what was essentially a clear and simple issue."

Montgomery's obstinacy and his lack of aggressive zeal had created the grounds for the Allies greatest strategical controversy of the continental campaign. In the planning for the cross-channel attack, Montgomery's contributions had been important. He insisted upon the enlargement of the landing forces and correctly predicted the general course that the invasion battle would follow. He rightly held that the Caen plain would attract the bulk of Rommel's armor which would be engaged by his British forces while the Americans could force a breakout through the bocage. But he also promised that he would quickly gain control of the airfields south of Caen which were essential for effective air operations in Normandy. However, his sustained failure to capture Caen and the airfields just beyond the city, as well as his egocentric manners and imperious affectations, had greatly offended the commanders of the Royal Air Force. Furthermore, his heavily prepared and delayed Villers-Bocage, EPSOM, CHARNWOOD and GOODWOOD offensives all had failed to breakthrough the German lines and

his forces had been unable to close the gap at Falaise until after large numbers of German troops had escaped certain entrapment. In addition, his constant harassment of Ike over strategy increased the general disregard for him among the British officers at SHAEF and among most of the American generals which continued throughout the war.

While the victory in Normandy had been one of the war's greatest feats, one of its greatest errors had been the failure of the Allied Supreme Headquarters (SHAEF) to develop contingency plans in the event of a total German defeat in Normandy and, consequently, the unexpected opportunity for a quick and successful invasion of a weakly defended Reich could not be exploited. Moreover, it proved to be a great error to have taken seven divisions out of Italy for the invasion of southern France which did not divert one German division from the defense of Normandy. General Mark Clark called it "one of the outstanding political mistakes of the war" since it greatly weakened Allied forces in Italy. Other blunders involved the mistaken beliefs that the port of Brest was essential and the assignment of substantial troops and resources to reduce enemy forces which had been cut-off on the Brittany peninsula. If the Brittany hold-outs had been merely by-passed, additional forces and supplies would likely have made it possible to breach the Siegfried Line and invade Germany before strong resistance could have been organized.

Ike's major priorities after the breakout were to pursue the enemy without let-up and to destroy him west of the Rhine, if possible; to continue to support the sustained movement up to seventy-five miles per day of thirty-six divisions requiring 20,000 tons of supplies daily from Cherbourg and the beaches over roads and railways that were in the process of being repaired; to join up the Allied forces in northern and southern France so as to establish a continuous front against the enemy; to clear the channel coast of V-1 and V-2 rocket launching sites; and to seize the port of Antwerp which was essential to supply the assault on Germany. By September 15, Montgomery's First Canadian and Second British Armies had rushed up along the coast of France to the Dutch Border, Bradley's First and Third Armies had reached Aachen at the German border and Metz in Alsace-Lorraine, and Dever's Seventh Army had closed in on the Belfort Gap at the Swiss border. Naturally, each commander considered his front to be of

the highest importance and believed that greater progress could be made if more supplies were available.

The Allies had intended to by-pass Paris so as to preserve it from the destruction of battle as well as to avoid the great consumption of supplies that would be required to sustain the city. But the uprising by the resistance required Eisenhower to send the French Second Division and the American Fourth Division into Paris which was liberated on August 25. Miraculously, German General Dietrich von Choltitz ignored Hitler's order and prevented the destruction of the magnificent "City of Light," and Allied forces rapidly proceeded past it in pursuit of the enemy. The primary objective of Montgomery's 21st Army Group had been to overrun the V-1 and V-2 launching sites along the coast, secure the all-important port of Antwerp, then to move above the Ardennes to be in position to take the Ruhr from the north. Bradley's 12th Army Group was directed to strike northeast of Paris, join Montgomery against the German Fifteenth Army in the Calais area, if needed, and otherwise push south of the Ardennes so as to be able to move against the Ruhr from the south.

Naturally, there was great joy throughout Britain and America over the sudden great victory of the Allies in Normandy. It was generally believed at home and in the battlefield that the Germans had been completely defeated and that the war would soon be over. Clearly, Hitler's senseless insistence that the Wehrmacht "stand and fight" in hopeless situations rather than to withdraw and regroup, was the major fault in the sudden and disastrous collapse of the German defense in the Normandy campaign, just as it had been in Russia. Otherwise, the Allies could have been held up at the Seine, at least, long enough for a more orderly withdrawal to the protection of the Siegfried Line. And although the remnants of ten Panzer divisions, three Panzergrenadier divisions, and thirty-eight infantry divisions managed to straggle back across the German borders, most of the Fifteenth Army had remained practically intact in expectation of the invasion at Calais. British author Richard Lamb says that the Germans expected Monty to block the Fifteenth Army's attempt to escape, and that had he done so, the "Fifteenth Army would have been trapped and annihilated...and the seaward approaches to Antwerp could have been opened at small cost in casualties." Cornelius Ryan brands Montgomery's failure to cut-off the Fifteenth Army's flight from the coast as "The Great Mistake," while Richard Lamb called it "The

Fatal Wrong Decision," and British author John Keegan referred to it as being "the most calamitous flaw in the Normandy campaign."

Nonetheless, B. H. Liddell Hart agreed with Montgomery that the war could have been "easily" won in September 1944, and that when the Allies arrived at the German border there was "no resistance" to prevent a drive into Germany itself. Liddell Hart claimed that "just as complete victory appeared within easy reach, the Allies' onrush petered out." However, while there may have been little organized enemy resistance at that time, it remains indisputable that adequate Allied supplies were not available to have sustained such a long and continued drive into Germany. Furthermore, as Eisenhower pointed out, had such a single thrust through the Siegfried Line been attempted, his other forces would have been deprived of the means to maintain aggressive positions elsewhere. In any case, it is certain that any single push into Germany would have been subjected to flanking attacks by the substantial forces which were still available, as demonstrated by the strength of the German forces at Aachen and Metz, and later, at Arnhem and the Battle of the Bulge.

As planned before the invasion, on September 1 SHAEF became operational in France and Eisenhower assumed overall command of all forces on the continent with Montgomery retaining command of 21st Army Group. In many quarters including Montgomery himself, the imposition of this pre-arranged command was interpreted as a "demotion" for Britain's "greatest general." Having just been named a Field Marshall and true to form, Montgomery claimed that the great Normandy victory had gone "according to plan" under his sole command of Allied ground forces, and the American generals as well as the British officers at SHAEF, were incensed over Monty's continually grasping ego. Believing Eisenhower "knew nothing about how to fight a battle," and confident that he possessed superior abilities to continue command of all Allied land forces, Monty began again to harass Ike about strategy. Up to that point, there had been a general agreement between Ike and Monty regarding the overall strategy for the assault on, and the breakout from the Battle of Normandy. Their prior disagreements had largely related to misunderstandings about what Monty had been expected to accomplish.

The brash new Field Marshal insisted that the Supreme Commander give him control of the US First Army and a priority on supplies with Bradley and Patton

to be held in place so that he could drive up the northerly route straight to Berlin to end the war. He demanded that more men and most of the supplies be placed under his command so that he could win the war. Ike was astounded at being subjected to demands by a commander about whom he had complained to Churchill for getting "bogged down" and being "over-cautious," whose lack of aggressiveness in both Italy and in Normandy had been excused due to Britain's manpower shortage, who was well known by both the Allies and the enemy for not launching an offensive without first having a massive superiority in men, equipment and supplies, and whose operations in Italy and in Normandy had failed to obtain their immediate objectives. Most incredibly, with the full support of the British Chief of Staff and the Prime Minister, Monty's ego had been permitted to convince himself that he could pull off the war's most spectacular feat in a totally unrealistic and unsound military operation. Both Eisenhower and SHAEF knew it was a ridiculous proposition and there was no way that Ike or Washington would agree to allow Montgomery to make such an ill-conceived and impractical "single, knifelike drive towards Berlin." Even John Keegan called it totally unrealistic!

Most military historians agree with Eisenhower who found Montgomery's request so impractical that he refused to consider it. Monty was informed that even should he succeed in getting well into Germany, without adequate stockpiles of supplies and railway bridges across the Rhine, there would be no way to support the many divisions that would be necessary to force their way to Berlin. Ike also explained the critical status of the supply problem pointing out that the rapid advance from Normandy meant that almost every road, bridge, railway, depot and base installation would need repair or relocation all the way between Normandy and the German borders. Therefore, it was essential that the port of Antwerp could be used as early as possible to build-up an adequate supply base before the Allied Armies could successfully launch an extended assault into Germany. Consequently, only limited initiatives could be undertaken anywhere before the approaches to Antwerp had been cleared and secured by Montgomery's forces. However, Ike did suggest that the clearing of the approach to Antwerp could wait while the British forces might, with the assistance of the available Allied airborne reserves, increase the security of the area with an attack

to get a bridgehead across the Rhine in the Arnhem area which would flank the Siegfried Line.

In anticipation of the assault on Germany, SHAEF had considered alternative actions including a major attack in the north across the Rhine by both the 21st and 12th Army Groups. It also included a drive to the south to be led by Patton's armor while Allied forces along the entire "broad-front" would push forward. But Eisenhower turned down what subsequent consequences have shown would have been a great battle catastrophe for the Allies. SHAEF had, in fact, already approved a plan for the campaign to follow "a broad front north and south of the Ardennes" with which Eisenhower had concurred. Ike informed Montgomery that while the need for a drive to Berlin was apparent, it could not be done by part of his forces while holding the remainder in check. And he advised the British commander that the best way for the Allies to defeat the Germans would be to pierce the Siegfried Line, cross the Rhine "on a wide front," and seize the Ruhr and the Saar. He also reminded Monty that Antwerp had to be opened before these objectives could be attained.

It was a controversy which became a great friction and a persistent distraction within the otherwise effective partnership and victorious alliance of the Anglo-American powers. And it never should have occurred for it was totally unrealistic for the British to expect that politically, if for no other reason, the United States that was supplying the overwhelming balance of manpower and materiel, would even seriously consider placing its major forces under the command of the most controversial general of the Allied European war. And especially, not Bernard Montgomery who was so generally disliked by the Americans and for whom they had such little respect.

To Eisenhower's credit, he never permitted Montgomery's persistent egotism to deflect him from his policy of "objective fairness" as Supreme Commander. Consistent with his efforts not to favor one ally over another, and while knowing that Montgomery had just committed a disastrous mistake by failing to secure the highly critical waterway approaches to the port of Antwerp, he agreed to support a "limited offensive" by Montgomery. Since Ike had been urged by Washington to get the Allied Airborne Army into action, which was the only combat-ready reserve available to SHAEF, and the airborne forces had seen no action since D-Day, he promised to turn over "all supply facilities available" in

support of Montgomery's "full blooded thrust" labeled "MARKET-GARDEN" to cross the Rhine at Arnhem. However, as will be seen, in his effort to respond to what appeared to be a welcome instance of aggressive leadership against the enemy, Eisenhower enabled Montgomery to make what would become one of the war's greatest Allied disasters.

The fact was, in spite of Churchill's pressure to eliminate the missile launching sites in Holland, Monty had been so intent on being the first across the Rhine that he by-passed the German Fifteenth Army, which remained largely intact as it moved up along the coast from Calais to the Scheldt Estuary to maintain an avenue of escape, as well as to block Allied access to Antwerp. Montgomery could have relatively easily cut-off the German withdrawal to the Scheldt, but after reaching Antwerp he made the gross error of stopping his advance for three days which prevented the British seizure of the undefended area between his forces and the Rhine. Britisher Lamb writes that "Montgomery made a fatal mistake by failing to seal off immediately the large German Army in the South Beveland peninsula...He compounded this mistake by opting for the disastrous airborne landings at Arnhem." The fact was that Monty's egotistical compulsion for further fame led him to intentionally avoid being held up by the "nasty and unglamorous" conquest of the Scheldt with its substantial German forces that continued to block Allied access to the essential port of Antwerp .

Montgomery enthusiastically believed that the opportunity to get across the Rhine at Arnhem would enable him to lead the Allied assault into Germany and he was authorized to use the Allied Airborne Army for the operation to begin on September 17, 1944. In the meantime, the status of Allied forces included the completion of fuel pipelines across the Channel; the Red Ball Express truck relays hauling supplies more than 300 miles continuously from Normandy; damaged railroads, highways and bridges being repaired; the Canadian First Army facing the Germans from Antwerp to the Dutch coast; the British Second Army reaching the German Border and the Nimegen area of Holland; the American First Army fighting in Aachen; the forests of the Ardennes being lightly occupied; Patton's Third Army preparing to attack Metz; and the US Seventh Army having reached Patton's flank from the landing in Southern France. The Allies had gained a wide and strong front from which to launch the final assault into Germany.

Eisenhower's decision to go along with Montgomery's proposed attack at Arnhem had been an effort to respond to continuing political pressure from the British as well as the need to apply the unused considerable Allied airborne reserve forces. On military grounds, however, it was an awful mistake. Ike had been influenced by a concern that the British, whether deserved or not, had a difficult and perhaps misunderstood time of it in Normandy. He had been disappointed in Montgomery in the past and he probably thought that Monty was entitled to another opportunity to show what he could do. He knew the Germans were greatly disorganized and there was a good chance that a quick and powerful stroke would give the Allies a bridgehead across the Rhine to permit the flanking of the Siegfried Line. Furthermore, it would provide a way to let Montgomery take the initiative, as well as to get him off his back. Some observers claim that had he not supported Montgomery's plan, he would have had to turn Patton loose again in the Metz area which would have created a furious reaction from the British. Obviously, Arnhem presented a tempting opportunity since the Germans were generally believed to be in disorder and incapable of strong resistance. However, it would have been far more important to Allied objectives if Ike had more forcefully insured that Montgomery had given first priority to the opening of the port of Antwerp. That he did not do so was one of the Supreme Commander's major mistakes and clearly prolonged the assault on Germany.

Monty had begun the planning for the airborne operation immediately. His first plan called for an assault on Wesel just beyond the Dutch-German border until it was found to be heavily protected by anti-aircraft defenses. Then he began to look at Arnhem, which lay about forty miles to the east along the Rhine some seventy-five miles behind the German front lines, and would permit him to flank the Siegfried Line. By September 7 he was just about ready to go but bad weather and the likelihood of stronger German opposition led to a postponement. Of course, every day that passed meant an increase in the build-up of resistance and had the attack been launched on September 7, it probably would have been successful. In the meantime, Montgomery's General Miles Dempsey, noting the build-up in German strength at Arnhem, asked that the operation by canceled and that Monty's force be used in tandem with the US First Army to attack Wesel. Monty responded by producing an even larger operation for Arnhem which he considered to be another attack against

Eisenhower's "broad-front" policy. He had complained that he was not getting the "priority" of supply he had been promised and he charged that Patton's offense was being made with supplies which should have come to his 21st Army Group. Ike denied that he had been promised an exclusive priority and told him firmly that the broad-front advance would continue. Indeed, he insisted that Antwerp be opened before any "major" drive into Berlin could be attempted, and emphasized that the recent first V-2 attack on London made it imperative that Holland be occupied without delay. Later, Eisenhower said that he would have had to be "nuts" for Monty to think that he could get all the supplies he wanted for his drive to Berlin.

After the Normandy victory, the press, the public and much of the military had optimistically assumed that the war was almost over and Montgomery believed that his greatly reinforced airborne attack would open up the possibility for his drive to Berlin. He proposed that the air operation should include three and a half airborne divisions including the US 82nd and 101st, the British 1st and the Polish 1st Parachute Brigade. The airborne would seize several key bridges so that the British ground forces would be the first to cross over the Rhine at Arnhem. Monty took for granted that the Germans were expecting a frontal attack on the Siegfried defenses and would not be prepared to defend an assault in the Nijmegen-Arnhem area. Thus a "corridor" would become available for his tanks and, once across the Rhine, he would have a "back door" entrance which would get him behind German defenses where he could dash for the Ruhr. Ike was obviously surprised to learn of such a daring offensive initiative coming from Montgomery, and although he knew the use of the Antwerp port was urgently needed, SHAEF obviously believed the Arnhem attack would maintain the Allied offensive against Germany since the drives of Patton at Metz and Hodges at Aachen had been held up. As a "limited offensive," Ike approved the operation at Arnhem and pressed for its early commencement. He also informed Monty he would do whatever he needed to get a bridgehead but wanted him to be across the Rhine "before they discussed anything else."

The British plan called for the airborne divisions to seize and hold the critical bridges at Eindhoven, Nijmegen and Arnhem and to secure and hold the narrow single highway for British ground forces to advance a distance of sixty-four miles to cross the Rhine at Arnhem. The 1st British Airborne and the Polish 1st

Parachute Brigade were to be dropped to seize and hold the bridge across the Rhine at Arnhem, the US 82nd Airborne would be landed to seize the bridges and secure the area between Grave and Nijmegen, and the US 101st Airborne would capture the crossings over canals and rivers between Eindhoven and Veghel. Meanwhile, the British XXX Corps would push its way up the highway to Arnhem to relieve the advanced airborne forces, and hopefully, flank the Siegried Line and force its way across the nearby border into Germany.

Good planning for a military operation requires that every phase involves a realistic opportunity for success as well as an alternative back-up action. From the beginning the parameters for MARKET-GARDEN were obviously limited and questionable. The attacking paratroopers and glidermen would be required to secure five major bridges before they could be blown up over which the armored spearhead would have to pass, in places along a single highway, for a distance of sixty-four miles. The corridor would have to be opened and held and, it was believed, would be the ideal operation for airborne forces. While reviewing the plans with Montgomery, General Frederick Browning of the British 1st Airborne Corps, asked how long it would take the armor to reach his airborne troops at Arnhem and Monty replied, "Two days." Then Browning said, "We can hold it for four" and added, "But Sir, I think we might be going a bridge too far!"

In Monty's defense, during the initial operational planning it was generally believed that few effective German forces remained in the area. Intelligence reports indicated there were little more than "troops of low category" present and Montgomery was convinced he would have little difficulty in giving them a good "crack." He also was vainly led to believe that once he got across the Rhine, the road to the German capital would be open. However, General Edgar Williams, Monty's intelligence chief, says he briefed Montgomery on September 10 on "the ominous German strength at Arnhem." Nonetheless, September 17 was set for launching the greatest airborne operation of the war. Well before then reports from the Dutch resistance indicated there were defensive build-ups in the very areas of Nijmegen and Arnhem where the airborne forces were to land. In fact, one report stated specifically that "battered panzer formations have been sent to Holland to refit" near the objectives of MARKET-GARDEN. Inexplicably, such reports were ignored. The attitude of the British planners appeared to be that since the war was thought to be almost over, Monty's offensive would be the final

opportunity to get the airborne forces back into battle and to place the British in position to be the first into Berlin.

In the meantime, the Allied naval forces had failed to attempt to block the successful retreat of the German Fifteenth Army along the coast of Holland which, in spite of constant daylight air attacks, managed to cross the Schelde from Breskens to Flushing. Incredibly, as the Germans passed within miles of the British forces, Montgomery had botched things up badly by failing to send his troops forward which would have trapped 100,000 Germans. Instead, their escape routes remained open and they withdrew into the very areas which Montgomery planned to attack. Furthermore, Monty would find that the battered remnants of the II Panzer Corps, which had been moved recently into a "peaceful" area behind the front for rest and refitting, was actually located surrounding Arnhem itself.

Operation MARKET-GARDEN should have been suspect from its beginning. It was strangely unlike the over-cautious Montgomery to have suddenly come forth with what Omar Bradley called one of the war's most "daring and imaginative" plans. While it was not known whether the idea had originated with Monty, Churchill or Alan Brooke, it appeared obvious that it was yet another attempt to circumvent Eisenhower's "broad-front" strategy. Obviously, the intent was to launch the British across the top of the Ruhr towards Berlin and to acquire a more important role in military and political policy instead of fulfilling their mission to protect the Allied left flank, and it would prevent Soviet access to the British sector of Germany and the Danish peninsula. Finally, in his second great blunder since the Falaise gap, Monty and his commanders stuck to the belief, in spite of contrary evidence, that the German resistance in the Arnhem area was not substantial and therefore, the risks of the huge airborne attack would be acceptable.

But the operation was in trouble from the start and its plans were "critically flawed." First, only seven days were available for planning an extremely complicated airborne operation that demanded quick decisions which could not be changed. There was no precedent for effective airlift deliveries and operations of such large forces with adequate equipment to survive longer than a short time at a great distance behind enemy lines. 2,500 gliders and 1,500 aircraft using twenty-four airbases would be required to lift 35,000 men including jeeps and

small artillery in an airborne operation much larger than that of D-Day in Normandy. Unfortunately, there were also command difficulties between American General Lewis H. Brereton, who without airborne experience had been named commander of the First Allied Airborne Army, and his deputy General Frederick Browning, who had no previous experience as a commander of an airborne corps. Furthermore, another questionable arrangement involved the limited availability of gliders and transport aircraft which would require drops to be made over a three day period. As a result, without heavy artillery or tanks, the advanced and relatively weak airborne troops would be forced to capture and hold off the rapidly increasing enemy at Arnhem for days before support could arrive. It also unrealistically required the American airborne units to capture numerous bridges intact and to hold them open for the entire British XXX Corps to move on a single-lane road, often vulnerably exposed on top of a dike, for a distance of sixty-four miles within two days to relieve the heavily attacked airborne units at Arnhem.

In planning MARKET-GARDEN it should have been obvious there had been too many questionable and menacing factors for a reasonable chance of success. The apparent uncertainties were too threatening to have been accepted: First, the difficulties in timing and landing adequate airborne forces precisely at planned locations; second, inadequate intelligence and ignored reports about the build-up of panzer forces in the area; third, the probability that some of the many bridges would be blown and could not be crossed; fourth, the possibility that bad weather would eliminate or restrict air cover; fifth, the difficulty of preventing such a long and narrow corridor from being cut or blocked by the enemy; sixth, the improbability that such a large force could traverse a single narrow causeway for such a long distance within the limited time available; seventh, the piecemeal commitment of the lightly armed airborne landings; and eighth, the unlikelihood that the advance force at Arnhem could successfully survive the delay caused by one or more of the above. Beelarts van Blokland, a young Dutch officer fighting with the British, believed a serious mistake was being made which violated Napoleon's axiom that an offensive action should not be undertaken unless it was "75 per cent sure of success" and the risk of chance did not exceed 25 per cent. Van Blokland was convinced that the British had reversed the ratio of chance.

The attack was also undertaken in spite of serious doubts expressed by airborne commanders Browning, General Roy Urquhart (British 1st Airborne), General Stanislaw Sosabowski (Polish Parachute Brigade), General James Gavin (US 82nd Airborne), and General Maxwell Taylor (US 101st Airborne). But when they made their doubts known, they were informed it was too late for plans to be changed. Afterwards, General Floyd Parks, US Chief of Staff of the Airborne Army, said he believed the operation had been ordered to provide Britain the chance to win "the last victory of the war." In any case, the bungled operation was Montgomery's responsibility and he refused to call it off in spite of warnings from his staff and substantial evidence of increasing enemy strength in the area. The commander of the British 2nd Battalion was "struck with horror at the plan to blast through the German resistance on a one-tank front." Incredibly, 20,000 vehicles were expected to pass along a single one-way road a distance of 64 miles within 60 hours. Lamb says that "it was ambitious to the point of recklessness."

The British were determined to go ahead against all odds even when ULTRA specifically indicated that panzer strength was strong in the Arnhem area. Undoubtedly, the most vital blunder of the operation occurred September 14 when Montgomery's Second Army headquarters evaluated the enemy in the Arnhem area "as weak, demoralized, and likely to collapse entirely if confronted with a large airborne attack," and when SHAEF's intelligence report on September 16 warned that the 9th SS Panzer Division, "and presumably the 10th" were confirmed to be in the Arnhem area, it was disregarded. General Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, went to see Monty about Ike's concerns about the operation. But, Smith reported that "Montgomery simply waved my objections airily aside." Edgar Williams said that Monty "was determined to go to Arnhem."

The unfortunate fact was that the egotism of command, inappropriate national pride, unjustified expectations, and unrealistic planning had created a disaster for the most powerful airborne offensive ever attempted. On September 17 the operation was launched from England with 1,400 bombers attacking anti-aircraft installations and enemy troop concentrations in the target area followed by 2,023 transports and gliders lifting more than 20,000 men with 511 vehicles, 330 artillery pieces and 590 tons of equipment protected by 1,500 Allied fighters. The US 101st Airborne division released about 7,500 men to

cover the bridges and to secure the highway between Eindhoven and Veghel. The 5,191 men of the British 1st Airborne landed "splendidly" in their drop zones which, in another instance of fatal planning, were chosen at too great a distance from their primary target—the Arnhem Bridge. 7,400 men of the US 82nd Airborne came down in the area between Grave, Nijmegen and Groesbeek near the German border and close to the Reichswald forest. All told, over 20,000 men with 511 vehicles, 330 artillery pieces, and 590 tons of equipment had been "brilliantly" lifted and delivered as planned. And importantly, surprise was obtained and casualties were considerably less than expected.

Unaccountably, in spite of the advance bombings, fighter strafings and the actual landings, the Germans were slow to react to what was actually taking place. Field Marshal Walter Model presumed the actions were merely preparations for a British ground attack, so initially the Germans did little more than to mine and guard all major bridges. Maxwell Taylor considered the drop by his 101st "to have been like an exercise." The 1st British Airborne was able to land west of Arnhem without the loss of a single glider or tow aircraft and the paratroopers came down amidst only sporadic anti-aircraft and small-arms opposition. General Urquhart thought everything had gone "splendidly," but thirty-six of the 320 gliders intended for the Arnhem area had been lost in transit due to engine failure, broken tow ropes, and heavy clouds which caused flight abortions which, unfortunately, contained the jeeps of the critical reconnaissance unit. Fatally from the beginning, the advanced British airborne had lost its "cavalry" and thereby turned over most of the initiative to the enemy.

However, the ignored reports of the Dutch intelligence had been correct. The Germans had expected that the Allies might try an end-run around their West Wall and had rushed much of their limited manpower and equipment to the Arnhem area. Furthermore, Montgomery's fatal delay in closing the escape routes of the German Fifteenth Army from the Calais area enabled much of it to be deployed against the Allied attack at Arnhem. In addition to the presence of the 9th and 10th Panzers at Arnhem, Nijmegen was being used as a staging area for enemy troops and new German anti-aircraft installations were being set-up at Eindhoven. Finally, the remnants of General Kurt Student's tough First Parachute Army, up to 20,000 men, had been dispatched to help fill the gap from Antwerp to Maastricht. The Germans had concluded that the Allies would

likely strike at the weakest sector of Germany's defense in the north for an attack on the Ruhr. So substantial preparations were well underway in the Arnhem area for the expected assault by Montgomery .

Indefensibly, the plans for the attack proved to have been based on assumptions and conditions which were incorrect or impractical and Operation MARKET-GARDEN developed much as the pre-assault critics had feared. First, by ignoring the advice to have the gliders crash-land close to the Arnhem and Nijmegen bridges to facilitate their early capture and the successful link-up with the ground forces moving north to Arnhem. Instead, since the RAF was concerned about heavy anti-aircraft protection at Arnhem, Urquhart's 5,191 men were scattered over five landing zones which were six miles from their objective. By the time they collected themselves and started out on three separate routes, their lack of jeeps prevented the reconnaissance squadron from rushing to the Arnhem bridge and taking it in a surprise attack so that it could be held until the 1st Parachute Brigade could arrive. The lack of reconnaissance vehicles also denied them knowledge of the enemy's whereabouts and enabled the Germans to rush elements of the 9th Panzers forward to block the advance toward the bridge by the British 1st Battalion and most of the 3rd Battalion. Obviously, lightly-armed paratroopers were no match for German armor. Thus only the Second Battalion and C Company of the 3rd Battalion were able to reach the northern end of the bridge and to seal it off by dark, thereby denying enemy reinforcements use of the shortest route to Nijmegen. But the Germans were able to continue their occupation of the south end of the Arnhem bridge which enabled them to block relief of the British forces in Arnhem by the XXX Corps.

The second great calamity occurred as the 1st Airborne radio system completely failed, and when Urquhart became separated from his troops for almost thirty-nine hours during the most critical time of the assault, the operation was without central leadership and direction. In the meantime, even after several reinforcing units had been dropped successfully, almost everything else continued to go wrong. As they had been warned, the Allied forces had been literally dropped on top of two panzer divisions. 1st Airborne Division was scattered and strongly attacked with heavy casualties as it failed to reach the small advanced British force at the bridge. Unfavorable weather prevented the landing of the 4th Brigade as well as badly needed supplies. Worst of all, the tanks of XXX Corps

had not reached Nijmegen and it was apparent that any hope of relief at Arnhem was much behind schedule. And soon it became obvious to Urquhart's troops that their only hope was to hold-on somehow against overwhelming odds.

The difficulties for the ground relief forces also began from the start. Incredibly, no air reconnaissance photos had been taken of the area to locate enemy anti-tank installations and when the XXX Corps jumped off following a furious assault by 350 guns, just as the mechanized columns began to get underway they were struck by German counter-fire which quickly knocked-out nine of the leading tanks. As other tanks attempted to by-pass the burning debris they were picked-off one-by-one. Montgomery's great assault had been stopped before it could begin. RAF fighter bombers were called in and the battle soon engulfed the highway corridor as the column became blocked with wreckage. Heavy fighting with substantial casualties was required to clear the way on the flanks as the column slowly forced its way forward. When the British learned they were opposed by units from the 9th and 10th Panzers, the crack First Parachute Army and elements of the escaped Fifteenth Army, they knew they were involved in a desperate struggle. Almost immediately they were critically behind schedule and at the end of the first day a distance of only seven miles had been covered. More than fifty miles still lay ahead and Montgomery had promised to reach Arnhem by the end of the next day. It was a hopeless beginning.

On the second day of the advance, unbelievably, no Typhoon fighter-bombers were available and Horrocks tanks were often required to leave the corridor to eliminate 88-mm guns which halted the progress of the column. By the afternoon, the XXX Corps had reached Eindhoven, which had fallen to the 101st Airborne, but it was held up when the bridge at Son was blown because none of Taylor's troops had been dropped just north of the bridge. By the next morning progress was resumed, and on September 19 at Nijmegen the 101st was reinforced, but the 6th Airborne was barely holding on for the third day in their fierce struggle north of the bridge at Arnhem. Although the British and Americans had successfully forced their way across the river Waal beyond Nijmegen, Horrocks' advance was opposed by the Tiger tanks of the elite Frundsberg Panzer Division which blocked their way to Arnhem only ten miles away.

The small decimated and isolated forces at the bridge fought heroically while other airborne units struggled desperately to breakthrough to make way for the

ground troops being attacked by increasingly stronger enemy forces. Then, just as the British and American forces linked up at Eindhoven, the enemy blew the bridge at Best. In the meantime, desperate efforts were made to reinforce the 82nd and 101st attacks to seize the critical crossings and to hold the highway open. Massive airlifts protected by fighter escorts were dropped on September 17 and 18 followed by heavy bomber attacks against the enemy. Some eighty-seven tons of supplies were dropped at Arnhem but were so scattered that the enemy got all but twelve tons. Nonetheless, in spite of every practical effort to seize what Monty thought was the best chance to quickly get across the Rhine, the situation had changed into a desperate "struggle for survival" along the long and narrow corridor to Arnhem. As it turned out, the area north of Nijmegen and around Arnhem had been heavily occupied by the enemy and Montgomery was forced to face up to the grim fact that Arnhem could not be relieved. After having held the north end of the bridge across the Rhine for four desperate days with only half of their men left, the 2nd Battalion at Arnhem surrendered. The situation was hopeless and the Allies' initial assault on the Rhine had become a great disaster for the British-American coalition's first major attempt to invade Germany.

Since XXX Corps had only reached the Rhine near Driel while strong German forces were launching fierce attacks against their thin corridor back to Nijmegen, the opportunities to reinforce the surrounded 1st Airborne Division west of Arnhem were extremely limited. On September 22, the Polish Parachute Brigade was dropped south of the Rhine, but by then, all river crossing points were under enemy gunfire. After a final desperate effort to get across the Rhine to reinforce Urquhart failed on September 24 and 25, Montgomery's only option was to withdraw his airborne survivors. On the 26th, only 2,163 men who had not been killed, wounded, or captured out of Urquhart's original force of 10,000, together with 160 Poles and 74 Dorsets, made it back across the Rhine under heavy German fire.

The major mistakes of MARKET-GARDEN were determined to have been: (1) Choice of an objective with too many questionable factors that limited the probability of its success; (2) Montgomery's failure to block the escape from the Scheldt of the Fifteenth Army; (3) excess of egotistical ambition in Montgomery's conclusion that he could force his way across the Rhine and by-pass the main line of resistance into the Fatherland ; (4) gross under-estimation

of Germany's ability to survive and recover from the Normandy debacle; (5) poor and hasty planning which overlooked decisive factors and reached unrealistic conclusions; (6) lack of essential intelligence regarding the area and particularly regarding the presence of the 9th and 10th Panzer divisions, Student's Parachute Army, and the Fifteenth Army; (7) failure to provide practical alternatives and back-up courses of action; (8) absence of road facilities to enable the concentration and maintenance of adequate force; (9) failure to land airborne forces close to first priority bridge crossings including the Arnhem bridge itself; and (10) numerous and unjustified tactical mistakes which should have been avoided. Many believe that Monty's most critical tactical blunder involved the division of the Arnhem airlift into two separate days which resulted in only 700 men out of 10,000 having actually reached the major objective.

Undoubtedly, the worst consequences of the ill-planned and mis-directed battle was that the opening of the port at Antwerp was delayed which postponed the final assault on Germany, the war could not be ended in 1944, and lengthy, hard and costly fighting would be required to get across the Rhine. Extremely high casualties were sustained by the 1st Airborne Division and huge assets of men and resources of the Allies only strategical reserve forces were wasted. In spite of that, Montgomery brazenly refused to acknowledge that his assault on Arnhem had failed and, in fact, he attempted to change the record by claiming that, "If the weather had been good the operation would have been 100% success instead of 90%..." Eisenhower accepted Montgomery's excuses and later wrote that the operation would have been successful except for bad weather. However, Richard Lamb says, "'Market-Garden' was the greatest military mistake of Mongomery's career, a defeat that prolonged the war." But to his last day, the ornery little British General remained "an unrepentant advocate of Market-Garden".

MARKET-GARDEN had proved to be an extremely costly blunder for the Allies. Their strategic reserve had been uselessly wasted with great loss of life. Had it been successfully executed it could have placed the Allies across the Rhine and shortened the war. Unfortunately, Great Britain's limited manpower lost much of its best young men who had volunteered for airborne service, and British Airborne's loss of 7,000 casualties and prisoners-of-war prevented it from ever serving again as a unit. Furthermore, losses among the 82nd and 101st American airborne were substantial together with the sacrifice of critically short

supplies for both the British and the Americans. It was a devastating defeat for the Allied forces and Montgomery, typically never admitting defeat, claimed it had "ensured operations successfully elsewhere." In fact, he not only attempted to blame the fiasco at Arnhem on the "lack of coordination" by others, but again had the nerve to raise the question of command suggesting that Eisenhower should place Bradley's 12th Army Group under his command. Ike found he could no longer avoid asserting his command over Montgomery and advised him that if he could not agree with the Supreme Commander's decisions, he could refer to higher authority. At that, Monty immediately backed down, saying no more would be heard from him about command. But, encouraged by Brooke and Grigg, Montgomery would continue to harass Eisenhower over command and the broad-front strategy until the end of the European war.

But after the disastrous failure at Arnhem, Montgomery was forced to face up to the difficult problem to eliminate the Germans who were obstructing the critical Allied need for the port of Antwerp. The unfortunate Canadians, who it seems had to do most of the British Army's most difficult tasks during the Western offensives, were given the difficult and costly job of clearing the French coast, and MARKET-GARDEN had left British troops scattered over much of the northern Allied front. Since Monty had ignored Ike's request to clear the Dutch coast before MARKET-GARDEN, afterwards Bedell Smith had to threaten to cut off Montgomery's supplies before he agreed to tackle the tough job of clearing the Antwerp approaches. To stress its importance, Eisenhower agreed to give Monty the US 7th Armored and 104th Divisions. Then on October 17, just when the US VIII Corps had almost cleaned out the German pocket at the Maas river, Monty suddenly pulled his 15th Division out of the operation so that the enemy bridgehead was not cleared, and the Americans suffered heavy casualties.

Omar Bradley was convinced that Monty's failure to open Antwerp was responsible for the bogdown of the Allied offensive and that it was one of the most "agonizing failures" of the war in Europe. Otherwise, George Patton believed to his death that he could not have been stopped before reaching the Rhine. Instead, Patton's Third Army at Metz and Patch's Seventh Army to the south were held up due to the shortage of fuel and ammunition which had been allocated to Montgomery's abortive effort to reach Arnhem, as well as by the German

resistance which had increased during the delay. Meanwhile, Hodge's First Army had bogged down in an attack on Aachen, which commenced on September 16, and required six weeks of fierce struggle before the first city in Germany was captured at a cost of 8,000 casualties and 200 tanks. While the increasingly stronger Allied forces were now pushing the borders of Germany, logistical support was still being hauled up to 500 miles from Normandy and Cherbourg. Fifty-four divisions were now stretched over 500 miles of front, and in the all-important air spaces above, the Allies had some 4,700 fighters, 6,000 bombers and 4,000 other types of aircraft. As SHAEF saw it, the pressing task would now be to close up to the Rhine, destroy the substantial forces remaining west of it, and to prepare to cross the last important barrier to the heart of Germany.

As winter approached the bad weather also slowed the Allied assault on all fronts. For the British, the opening of the shipping access to Antwerp had been bitterly contested and delayed until late November 1944 at a cost of over 27,000 casualties. By then, Bradley's offensive towards the Rhine had begun and the First Army became mired down in the Huertgen Forest in one of the most difficult and costly battles of the war. Against strong resistance in terrible weather, only slow progress with heavy casualties reached the Roer River where the advance was blocked by enemy flooding of the area. US Army Historian Charles B. MacDonald said that it was "a misconceived and basically fruitless battle that could, and should have been avoided," and that "had the First Army gone for the Roer Dams early in the fighting," the Huertgen battle and 33,000 casualties would not have occurred. To the south, Patton had driven his assault towards the Saar region, got across the Moselle, captured Metz and crossed the border into Germany. Further south, Dever's Sixth Army Group was lined up with the Third Army in the difficult Vosges mountain area.

By early December the Allied lines were in what General Eisenhower called a "badly stretched condition...particularly on Bradley's front," where attacks were being maintained in the north at the Roer and facing the Saar in the south. To maintain Allied momentum, Ike felt he had to take the risk of using only a "static, or protective, force" in the hilly rough and heavily wooded Ardennes area where only four divisions were covering a distance of seventy-five miles. It would have been a mistake, he believed, to permit a purely defensive stance to deprive him of the ability to exploit opportunities for attacks along the entire *front*.

Furthermore, it was obvious as MARKET-GARDEN had proved, that the more time the enemy was granted, the stronger he would become. Bradley, being well aware of the Ardennes risk, hoped that the enemy would make an attack there, saying, "We could kill many more Germans with a good deal less effort if they would only climb out of their holes and come after us for a change." Ike was confident that "any attack the German might launch could eventually be effectively countered." The Americans called it "the Ghost Front."

But Adolf Hitler, with the fanatic conviction that his invincible "power of will" would reverse the course of events, brooded over a massive counter-offensive to catch the Allies off-guard, divide the British and the Americans, restore the initiative to the Wehrmacht, and give him time to organize the defense of the Fatherland so more German forces could be rushed to the East to stop the Russians. Noting that the major strength of the Allied pressure on Germany's borders had straddled the Ardennes forest, the Fuehrer met with his generals on September 25 and, to their surprise, outlined his new offensive complete with location, forces, tactics and schedule. He predicted that the weather would be their ally and that surprise and speed would bring success. So the Fuehrer called for the Fifth and Sixth Panzer Armies to launch a "blitzkrieg attack" through the lightly held Ardennes (as in 1940 against the French), cross the Meuse and capture the vital port of Antwerp before the Allies would know what had happened. The infantry of the Seventh and Fifteenth Armies would quickly follow to defend the flanks and he was confident it would be another spectacular and successful attack like Poland in 1939, France in 1940, and Russia in 1941. Lastly, he believed that an act of Providence would bring him another great victory which would "bring down this artificial coalition with a crash."

As Hitler's commanders for the offensive General von Rundstedt and General Model knew, Germany's resources were inadequate for such an offensive. Wehrmacht officers were fully aware of Germany's losses in both the East and the West and it was apparent to most of them that something desperate had to be done to save the Reich. General Gunther Reichhelm of the German General Staff, saw that "Germany would soon break down if something extraordinary, some miracle, did not take place." But the Fuehrer, particularly since the attempt on his life, despised and ignored his generals and blamed them for Germany's defeats. Now more than ever he was convinced that only he could defeat the

enemy and save the Third Reich from extinction. Thus by December 16, almost miraculously in spite of horrendous defeats on both fronts, Hitler managed to scrape together and equip four armies for the fifty-mile long assault against the Allies. Home defense units from the German interior were transported in spite of heavy air attacks, special training was completed, eighty percent of Germany's remaining tanks, artillery and trucks were assembled and transported, and all was accomplished under complete secrecy. In the meantime, new Allied offensives had been launched at Aachen, Julich and Duren on the Roer, but Hitler forbade any major distractions from his Ardennes offensive. Other Allied actions at Nijmegen, the breaching of the West Wall as far as the Roer, and the pressure on the Siegfried Line as far as Switzerland, had greatly reduced the German forces available for the offensive. However, it was apparent to many of the German generals that the Fuehrer's desperate initiative would fail, Germany's last resources would be wasted, and the Reich would easily be occupied by the enemies from the West and the East.

Like MARKET-GARDEN, the concept for the German offensive was hopelessly flawed from its beginning. Neither adequate men, air power, weapons nor fuel were available; the condition of the weather was unreliable; the dependency on the capture of large quantities of enemy fuel and supplies was highly uncertain; the planned annihilation of twenty-five to thirty Allied divisions was totally unlikely; and while it was known that political dissension existed between the Allies, it was completely unreasonable to expect that it would seriously effect the Allied defense under a counteroffensive. Lastly, Hitler believed that his surprise attack would provide relief from the pressure of the Allied broad-front offensive and give Germany the desperately needed opportunity to organize and reinforce her borders against, what would obviously be, the final Western assault. However, one of Hitler's greatest blunders of the war was matched by the Allies' greatest intelligence blunder that gave the Germans the opportunity to further delay the end of the war, to inflict grievous losses upon the American forces, and to magnify the increasingly difficult British-American relationship.

Unfortunately, unverified assumptions by Allied intelligence and commanders that the campaign in western Europe had been won, and that the war with Germany would soon be over, had doomed Allied planning for MARKET-GARDEN as well as the defense in the Ardennes. Following the break-out from

Normandy, expectations of rapid progress and a quick victory dominated all Allied commands and led intelligence to overlook its "worst-case responsibility." The defeat of the mighty Wehrmacht after the invasion, the domination of European skies by Allied fighters and bombers, the effect of defeat upon the morale of the German people, and the hope for a reduction in Hitler's power by the July 20 revolt had convinced the Allies that in spite of the fanatic German defense, the enemy no longer had the men nor the weapons for anything but a desperate last stand to defend its borders.

Another great blunder by the Allies involved activities by the enemy which were either ignored or were considered to be unimportant by SHAEF intelligence. They concluded that since the First and Sixth Panzer Armies could not be located they had been withdrawn from the Allied front. The fact was, however, that the Sixth Panzer Army was assembled on the open plain of Cologne literally under the eyes of Allied intelligence and that even air intelligence, being restricted by weather conditions, had searched only where units were expected to be located. Most fatefully, Allied intelligence failed to penetrate the highly effective security measures ordered by Adolf Hitler. Still it remains incredible how the Germans were able to refit their badly battered divisions and create new divisions with 250,000 men, 2,168 tanks and assault guns, 1,900 pieces of artillery and rockets, countless vehicles and 1,000 aircraft. All that while operating vast communication and transportation facilities, and stockpiling huge quantities of supplies without being detected by the Allies. Even information from enemy captives about the build-up in the Eifel area had been interpreted by SHAEF G-2 as being merely the normal traffic of troops being reassigned and replaced.

However, about two weeks before the attack, SHAEF intelligence chief General Kenneth W.D. Strong, among others, was concerned about the Ardennes sector and warned the staff that the reserve panzer divisions in the area could have been either preparing for shipment to Russia, for counterattack of an Allied advance, or to "stage a relieving attack through the Ardennes." Ike's deputy General Walter "Beedle" Smith sent Strong to caution First Army. General Bradley was aware of the threat, and while he thought an attack was a "remote possibility," he had "earmarked certain divisions" to handle such an eventuality. According to Charles MacDonald, however, the record does not show that Bradley's commander of his VIII Corps along the southern "Ghost Front" had

placed his units on alert and no plans existed for resistance to an assault by the enemy known to be assembled in the Eifel. To the contrary, VIII Corps had been ordered to draw the enemy away from the V Corp attack on the Roer dams to the north by feinting an attack in Luxembourg.

Two intelligence officers almost succeeded in predicting the surprise attack which could have limited its disastrous impact upon the American forces. Colonel Donald Christensen, G-2 of the 2nd Division, saw the possibility of "a major counterattack" by two panzer divisions he believed were probably being concentrated south of the Roer dams. At First Army headquarters at Spa, Belgium, G-2 Colonel Benjamin "Monk" Dickson, upon learning that numerous POW's had reported an offensive to occur between December 17 and 25, and after noting reports of heavy reinforcements moving towards the Allied line throughout the Eifel area, concluded that an attack would occur through the Ardennes between Monschau and Echternach. Unfortunately, however, neither Christensen nor Dickson asserted their conclusions strongly enough to prevent them from being ignored. In spite of considerable information from ULTRA and other intelligence sources which should have resulted in greater precautionary actions and alternative worst-case planning, clearly the top American commanders failed in their responsibility to consider every eventuality. Rather, it was generally and erroneously assumed that the Germans did not have the resources for a substantial counter-offensive, otherwise it would be used to block Allied progress across the northern section of the Rhine in the most direct route towards Berlin. Obviously as in 1940, it appeared unrealistic to even suggest an attack might occur over the most difficult terrain of the entire 625-mile Western front. Nothing else appeared to make sense and no other possibility was seriously considered. But it would be the same tragic mistake the French had made in 1940.

Clearly, the Allied top generals did not appear to be greatly concerned about any improper disposition of troops. Eisenhower had planned a SHAEF meeting with Bradley on troop reinforcements at Versailles and Montgomery had requested a leave to spend Christmas in England. Ike had said that he believed the Germans would make at least "one desperate counter-offensive" before they would give up the battle in the west, and that he and Bradley concluded that if the enemy struck in the Ardennes, adequate back-up forces were available to be moved up to stop it. He pointed out that the 7th Armored Division in the north

and the 10th Armored Division in the south had been purposely placed on the flanks of the area. In addition, the 82nd, 101st and 17th Airborne Divisions were in reserve, and the 11th Armored and 87th Infantry Divisions were in nearby England. Finally, it was pointed out that Montgomery's XXX Corps was available, if needed, to reinforce the American front in the Ardennes.

When the German surprise attack struck on December 16, 1944, Hodges' First Army was heavily involved in the assault across the Roer River to the north of the Ardennes, and to the south Patton's 3rd Army was preparing to renew it's advance into the Saar. The seventy-five mile wooded front between them was held by the First Army VIII Corps consisting of the 99th, 106th, 28th and 4th Infantry Divisions with the 9th Armored Division in reserve. Nonetheless, the historic invasion route through the Loshiem Gap used successfully by the Germans in the wars of 1870, 1914 and 1940, was left practically undefended. At dawn, the massed forces of the Fifth and Sixth Panzer Armies struck unexpectedly at the weakest points of the front, rapidly penetrating through the snow and driving a deep division between the American units. Eisenhower and his commanders were slow to react. The SHAEF intelligence summary for December 17 claimed that it was merely "a diversionary attack on a fair scale." But by the next day, when the 1st Panzer Division was found to be within several miles of the huge and largely undefended fuel depot at Stavelot, it was apparent that the Germans were pouring through a fifty mile wide gap and were already some twenty miles deep into Belgium. As the Germans expected, bad weather greatly assisted the assault by keeping the skies cleared of Allied planes.

Although shocked by the unexpected strength of the attack, Ike responded immediately and effectively. Recognizing that First Army units had been split with severed communications, over Bradley's strenuous objections, Eisenhower appointed Montgomery to command all units on the northern shoulder of the "Bulge." According to one of his own officers, Monty "strode into Hodges' H.Q. like Christ come to cleanse the temple." The 82nd Airborne was moved to Stavelot, the 101st was rushed to Bastogne, and the 17th Airborne and the 11th Armored were immediately committed. The most critical area was Monschau where the Sixth Panzers struck the 2nd and 99th Divisions who were advancing towards the Roer dams. But the Americans stood fast. Then, after the US 7th Armored fought its way into St.Vith, it was joined by remnants of the 28th and

106th Divisions, and succeeded in dividing the German attack and prevented the encirclement of Monschau. Eventually driven back, 7th Armored forced a fatal delay in the German assault that enabled the US 1st, 2nd and 9th Divisions to stabilize the northern shoulder of the counteroffensive.

Ike also ordered Patton to move north and attack the southern German flank. In one of the outstanding maneuvers of the war, within three days three divisions of the Third Army pulled away from their front facing Germany, turned ninety degrees to their left, and launched their attack towards Bastogne. Meanwhile, the German armored spearhead had almost reached the Meuse River near Dinant, but by December 22nd it was clear to Eisenhower that the Germans had been stopped a great distance from their objective—the all-important port of Antwerp. Although the enemy had managed to pierce the American lines for a distance of fifty miles, Ike stated in his Orders of the Day, "By rushing out from his fixed defenses the enemy may give us the chance to turn his great gamble into his worst defeat."

At last on December 23, the weather briefly cleared and Allied planes were able to bomb the enemy and drop supplies for Bastogne, and by December 26 Patton had driven into Bastogne itself. By the 28th, Ike again became impatient with Montgomery who was still in the process of preparing his reserve to launch a counteroffensive against a German attack he expected in the north. Actually, he had wanted to retreat to shorten the front but Bradley, Hodges and Collins "strongly opposed" his plan for a limited withdrawal. Eisenhower attempted to push Montgomery into taking the initiative but Monty, true to form, refused to move until he believed he was strong enough to insure victory. Finally, Ike had gone to see Montgomery and believed that he had agreed to attack by January 1. Counting on British help on that date, Bradley and Patton attacked the southern shoulder only to find that, in the absence of an attack by the British in the north, the Germans had concentrated their armor against the US First and Third Armies. The Americans were furious with Montgomery for having broken an agreement.

To make matters worst, Montgomery with his usual contempt for the Americans, infuriated Eisenhower by raising the need for a single ground commander again and suggesting that only he was capable of doing what was needed to win the war. Bradley and Patton threatened to resign rather than serve under Montgomery, and Ike decided that Montgomery had to go. In consultation with

the British officers at SHAEF, a message was prepared informing Washington that Montgomery should be fired. Monty's Chief-of-Staff Freddie de Guingand learned of the decision and convinced Ike to permit him to speak to Montgomery. After being warned that he was about to be sacked and replaced by Alexander, Monty immediately backed-off again, pledged the Supreme Commander his "one hundred percent" support and asked Ike to ignore his views. Perhaps, for the first time, Monty had been firmly put into his place.

But the overpowering ego could not be long restrained and it was soon evident Montgomery would not keep his word to Ike as he again demanded an increase in the American units under his command. Meanwhile, the British press had began to credit him for the victory in the Ardennes. At a press conference on January 7, Monty was at his cocky best and claimed that he had won the Battle of the Bulge and saved the Americans from a terrible defeat. The Americans were outraged and Eighth Army intelligence chief Brigadier Bill Williams said that Monty had been "like a cock on a dunghill." It was, of course, not true. The fact was that only one British division was involved in the fighting and had sustained 1,500 casualties of which 200 were killed. The Americans suffered 76,000 battle casualties with 140,000 casualties from all causes including 8,000 dead. Unquestionably, as a result of Montgomery's insufferable insubordination, American troops were later removed from his command which resulted in the British forces being denied a more important role in the final assault on Germany.

The difficulties with Montgomery continued as he was encouraged and supported by his mentor Alan Brooke who had wanted to be Supreme Commander and believed that Eisenhower was not qualified for the job. Backed up by Brooke, the mean-spirited little general could not hold his massive ego in check, nor avoid sticking it to the Americans whenever he could. As soon as the Germans had struck the Americans in the Ardennes, in an effort to gain control of US units to support his strengthened northern offensive so that he could "win the war," Montgomery willfully issued a false report claiming that five towns still held by the Americans had been captured, and that there was nothing to prevent the Germans from reaching the Meuse river. The only thing that would save the Allies, he announced, was for Eisenhower to place him in command of the American units on the northern front, and he literally demanded that Ike be ordered to do so. When Churchill called Eisenhower, he found that Ike had

already decided to make such a temporary arrangement since the German attack had driven between Bradley's First and Third armies. As the new Allied northern commander, Monty found things to be not nearly as bad as he had said they were. It was true, however, that the Americans had been surprised and shattered by the powerful and unexpected assault, and criticism of the initial reaction of First Army was justified. Critics charged that too much time was wasted in recovering from the shock of the attack, counterattacks were attempted before setting up effective defenses, no efforts were made to create any reserve forces, and heavy losses were incurred by holding poorly selected and unimportant positions. Lastly, US commanders made a grievous mistake by assuming that Liege, rather than Antwerp, was the major German objective..

When Monty took command in the north, true to form, he immediately sought to "tidy up" the battle. That meant, as it had in North Africa, that he would not take the offensive until he had built-up an overwhelming superiority of men and materiel, and the Germans knew him to be "a very cautious man who was not prepared to take any sort of risk." His intention was to "sort out the battle," withdraw units and rearrange units on the line, and to set-up a reserve. Fortunately, General Courtney Hodges of the First Army flatly refused to cooperate with such a plan, and General Ridgway of the XVIII Airborne had other ideas. They knew that once the pressure on the panzer divisions was let-up, the key roadblock at St. Vith would fall and the hard driving tanks of Task Force Peiper would reach the Meuse river. Fortunately, a defensive line had been held until Montgomery was able to back it up with a new corps.

Once it was clear that the Germans were on the defensive, Montgomery began to brag about the essential leadership he had provided to avoid disaster claiming that it was "possibly one of the most interesting and tricky battles I have ever handled." In a press conference on January 9, he boasted that after having taken over command of the northern sector, when the American forces had been driven apart by the Germans, only he understood the situation and took the necessary action to stop the Germans from crossing the Meuse river. That, of course, was an outright lie. The fact was that by the time Montgomery managed to get a few tanks and guns up to the Meuse, and to create a screen by the XXX Corps between the Meuse and Antwerp by December 21, the Germans had been scheduled to be across and beyond the defenseless Meuse. It was the desperate

and valiant resistance of the Americans at Elsenborn Ridge, St. Vith, Bastogne and the Ambleve river which had prevented seven armored divisions from ever reaching the Meuse.

Montgomery also claimed that he had "employed the whole available power of the British Group of Armies" to the battle which also was not true. He committed only one infantry division, two battalions of paratroops and two tank regiments on the line of conflict for just ten days as a flank guard for the US First Army, and his claim of a critical role for the British forces was denied by their low casualty figures. Even Winston Churchill rebuffed his arrogant Field Marshall by saying before the House of Commons that "Care must be taken in telling our proud tale not to claim for the British Army an undue share of what is undoubtedly the greatest battle of the war and will, I believe, be regarded as an ever-famous American victory."

The fact was that Monty was given command of the northern sector four days after the battle had begun and by then the fate of the struggle had already been decided. It is a recognized axiom of war that if an offensive does not obtain its objective within three days, it is considered a failure. At the end of three days all five of the forward American strongpoints continued to resist and the offensive was critically behind schedule. In spite of total surprise and initial chaos, the Americans had reversed the battle from another "blitzkrieg" into a fierce struggle. In fact, the valiant stand of the American troops on the northern flank had forced Hitler to cancel the attack by his Fifteenth Army. Unquestionably, the undaunted defense of the First Army in the north, and by the XVIII Corps and the VII Corps at Bastogne, had so successfully slowed down the German assault that by December 26, when the weather finally enabled Allied planes to bomb the panzers and cut-off their supplies, the German initiative ended. In fact, by the time Montgomery had made himself ready to attack, the Germans had been ordered to withdraw to a defensive line between La Roche and Bastogne.

While normally stronger American defensive arrangements might have discouraged the German attack, or might more successfully have resisted it, Hitler was convinced that the invasion of Germany in the west could only be held off by a bold offensive action against the enemy. But there was never any chance of success and the battle was a foolish and costly waste of Germany's limited remaining defensive assets. There was no way that Hitler could avoid the

inevitable invasion of Germany by the overwhelming forces of both the Allies and the Russians. And it was unforgivable that the German military permitted him to continue to cause the useless slaughter and destruction of the nation. Consequently, the abandonment of the protection of the Siegried Line, and the totally impractical and ill-advised offensive against the West, merely hastened the final collapse of the Third Reich. Resources were obviously inadequate for a successful offense, adequate fuel supplies and reinforcements were not available to sustain the attack, and there was little protection against Allied air attacks when the weather cleared. Nonetheless, the surprise attack of twenty-eight divisions including nine armored divisions with 2,500 tanks and assault guns, against a weakly-held area of just three American divisions along a largely undefended front of about seventy miles should have, at least, reached the Meuse river some fifty miles inland. Instead, the Germans had failed to commit adequate follow-up forces into the battle quick enough to sustain the momentum of the assault.

North of the breakthrough three Allied Armies covered a 250-mile front with Montgomery's 21st Army Group covering the lower Rhine in Holland. Simpson's Ninth Army faced east against the upper West Wall, and part of Hodges' First Army faced southward towards the German bulge. On January 1, the Luftwaffe made its heaviest attack in months mainly against Allied airfields and destroyed many planes on the ground, but about half of the German planes were shot down. Meanwhile, sustained attacks by First Army in the north, and Third Army in the south, joined up at Houffalize on January 16, then pressed eastwards forcing the enemy back into Germany. But with their usual strong defensive tactics most of the enemy units had withdrawn safely with their units largely intact.

The last "blitzkrieg" also had failed because the initial resistance of the thin line of American soldiers in the Ardennes was more effective than expected, the weather and the Ardennes terrain made passage of the attacking units difficult, the Germans were unable to capture adequate fuel for their panzers, the initial assault forces were not quickly reinforced, objectives were not adjusted to exploit local advances, the build-up failed to support the penetration, and the shoulders could not be maintained against strong flanking attacks. Moreover, the Germans did not believe the American response would be effective and that the weather would not permit the Allied domination of the air to be resumed. Charles

MacDonald considered the Battle of the Bulge to have been "the greatest battle ever fought by the United States Army," and British historian Peter Elstob wrote that "Hitler underrated the Americans as soldiers, being convinced they would crumble if hit hard enough."

Hitler's long-shot and costly gamble to split the Allies, both figuratively and politically, left Germany without the mobile reserve to provide any further effective resistance against the Allied invasion of the Fatherland. The irreplaceable loss of hundreds of tanks, self-propelled guns and a thousand aircraft literally wasted his last chance to take any further effective initiative against the enemy in the west. Furthermore, he had to send reinforcements back to the East against the renewed onslaught of the Russian offensives. Consequently, the Allies were able to renew their assault in the west without fearing any substantial counterattack. Hitler's desperate counteroffensive left the Reich almost undefended. Yet as some historians have pointed out, the Fuehrer's only alternatives had been either to concentrate his decimated forces to launch a surprise attack or to attempt to defend Germany on a 600-mile front against the unlimited resources of the enemy. Since Nazi propaganda had convinced the Germans that death was preferable to unconditional surrender, Hitler knew that his final desperate offensive would have been wasted against the Soviet masses. But, he believed, if the panzers could seize Antwerp, the situation in the west would be changed dramatically. While the Fuehrer made many great blunders during the war, the Ardennes offensive was clearly the most desperate and improbable "miracle" that he conjured up during the entire war.

But what was gained by such a desperate gamble? First, the Allies suffered the greatest setback of the war in the west. For a time, confusion and indecision reigned, and the greatest surrender of American troops in the European war occurred. Second, for the first time in the Western offensive, the Germans had seized the strategic initiative, inflicted great loss of life and materiel on the Allies, and substantially delayed the inevitable end of the desperate struggle. Third, the command controversy between Eisenhower and Montgomery was renewed and created all kinds of difficulties for Allied solidarity. Fourth, while the casualties had been grievously heavy, the Germans believed that they had inflicted greater damage upon the Allies in both men and materiel than was actually the case. In the absence of Allied airpower, the Germans succeeded in almost wiping out two

American infantry divisions and inflicted heavy casualties on fourteen other infantry divisions. Eight US armored divisions had become so crippled that five had to be temporarily removed from action and the three airborne divisions, which comprised the bulk of SHAEF's reserve forces, would not be available for action for some time afterwards. About 1,000 tanks, 500 planes, thousands of weapons and vehicles, and vast quantities of fuel and supplies had to be replaced by the Americans. But such a massive backlog of supply of both men, equipment and supplies had been built up in the American Communications Zone that within two weeks following the "Bulge," the American forces were stronger than when the attack began. In fact, none of the Germans gains proved to be anything but temporary and the time lost and the casualties suffered were quickly made up against the fatally weakened enemy.

For the Germans, however, the defeat of what they knew to be their last hope for offensive success was disastrous because the losses could not be replaced and the morale of the Wehrmacht and the German people was finally shattered. They knew that their 130,000 casualties, of which 19,000 were killed, and many thousands of missing men and prisoners could not be replaced. They also believed that the only choice remaining for Germany was resistance to the death or unconditional surrender to Soviet Bolshevism.

Throughout the Battle of the Bulge planning continued at SHAEF for the final offensives against Germany itself. The first major task would involve the destruction of all German forces west of the Rhine. Then the Allies would face what was expected to be the most difficult phase of the western campaign—the assault across the Rhine which would be heavily defended, followed by the advance into the center of the Reich for the elimination of all remaining resistance. It had been apparent that the Ardennes battle had represented the sacrifice of most of Hitler's remaining offensive capability and, with the continuing domination of the skies by Allied air forces and the power of the Soviet advance from the East, it was apparent that the final end was near.

But soon Brooke and Montgomery resumed their bickering with Eisenhower over Allied strategy. The Americans, as well as the British at SHAEF, believed that Churchill and Brooke were pushing Montgomery, with his enthusiastic cooperation, to restore Monty's image as a hero and to win the war for Britain. They continued to allege that Allied forces were not strong enough to maintain a

continuous front line offensive against Germany and that only a concentrated single "full-bloodied thrust" across the Rhine, while holding other Allied forces on the defensive, would be successful. And again the suggestion of a single ground commander was raised. It was obvious to Ike that Brooke and Montgomery wanted to take charge of the battle in the west and that Monty's forces in the north, reinforced by American units, should cross the Rhine and march on Berlin. But Ike, strongly backed by George Marshall, blocked the British initiative.

SHAEF's operational plan for the assault on Germany called for a three-phase Allied offensive. Montgomery's 21st Army Group would attack in the north, Bradley's 12th Army Group in the center, and Devers Seventh Army in the south. Montgomery was to jump off first, and as he prepared to take the offensive, he insisted that the US First and Third Armies be ordered to stop their attacks so that Monty could build his forces as strongly as possible to the north. Ike refused.

On February 4 Bradley's First Army captured the Roer dams and four days later Monty launched five infantry divisions against the Reichswald area in Operation VERITABLE following the most concentrated artillery bombardment of the western front. But the victory at Arnhem had given the Germans five months to extend strong defenses above the top of the Siegfried Line. Although a breakthrough was obtained, again a single road bordered by water prevented the necessary reserve forces to be brought up so that two armored and two parachute enemy divisions were able to prevent the breakout. On February 10 the Germans postponed Monty's launching of the US Ninth Army in Operation GRENADE by opening the last Roer dam. However, Monty believed that Hitler had committed another major blunder by making his forces stand and fight west of the Rhine—the last major barrier to the Reich. Regardless, the Germans continued to involve British and Canadian troops in heavy fighting. Meanwhile, the US Ninth Army, which had remained under Montgomery after the "Bulge" to appease the British, struck northeastward on February 23 and, once across the Roer, the converging Allied attacks forced the Germans to withdraw toward the Rhine so that the northern area was soon cleared of enemy forces. And it was Simpson's Ninth Army that reached the Rhine first and found a good place to get across. He later said, "Had I been under General Bradley, I would have just sent

a division over there, just like that, but being under Montgomery [I could not]." As Britisher David Irving writes, "Montgomery had been planning his own crossing for a month. He did not choose to be upstaged."

By late February, Bradley began a series of assaults with the First Army on his left and the Third Army to his right that were brilliantly executed and quickly cleared the enemy from the Eifel area. While Montgomery's forces were clearing the Lower Rhineland, Hodges' First Army reached Cologne on March 5, other First Army units turned southward to entrap the enemy in the Eifel region, and Patton unleashed a frontal attack from east of Metz. The tanks of "old Blood and Guts" raced eastward fifty-six miles in three days to reach the Rhine near Moselle. On March 7, First Army's 9th Armored Division unexpectedly grabbed the relatively intact Ludendorf Bridge at Remagen and Bradley immediately rushed five divisions across the Rhine in one of the most courageous and important actions of the war. In one bold sweep, the war was significantly shortened and the lives of many thousands of Allied troops were saved. Then it became suddenly clear to both the Allies and the Germans that the Americans had gotten past the last major obstacle and the war was all but over in the west.

Now the way was open at last for George Patton to turn the Third Army loose to launch a major attack. The VIII Corps broke through all resistance towards the northeast and joined the First Army on the Rhine at Andernach on March 9, leaving the Germans holding only the Saar Basin, which was also quickly overcome, and all enemy resistance west of the Rhine was ended on March 25. In his estimate for the latest month-long campaign, Ike reported that enemy losses had equaled twenty full divisions in addition to the destruction of huge supplies of materiel.

At the same time, Monty's elaborate "set-piece" crossing of the Rhine, according to David Irving, was being planned "with as much attention to detail as for Overlord" so as to be powerful enough to go right into the heart of Germany. He had assembled 250,000 men in twenty-nine divisions plus seven brigades, and since Monty believed that his attack on Arnhem had failed for lack of force, he tried unsuccessfully to get another ten divisions from Eisenhower. In fact, British publicity had built-up his Operation PLUNDER to be one of the largest and most spectacular operations of the war, only to have the cross-Rhine attack overshadowed by the dramatic American capture of the Remagen bridge. To make

matters worst, one day before Montgomery launched his great assault, George Patton took a bridge south of Mainz and crossed the Rhine "on the run."

Monty's second attempt to cross the great river barrier on March 24 was preceded by a massive bombardment by 2,000 guns followed by the landings of the British 6th and the American 17th airborne divisions and all went "according to plan" against light opposition. Montgomery reported that the operation had been "most successful" and that he had gotten six divisions across the Rhine with only 1,200 casualties. But he was criticized for an overcommitment of force and, particularly, that the airborne forces had not been needed. Within four days the bridgehead reached a depth of twenty-eight miles and a width of twenty-five miles and was, nonetheless, a substantial victory. Meanwhile, Patton had expanded his crossing and, by the next day, he was also across the river Main at Aschaffenburg. Beyond the Remagen bridgehead Bradley's troops had moved well and overran Limburg. At last, the Americans and the British were not only across the Rhine but had established strong bridgeheads leading into Central Germany on all three of their major fronts.

Hitler's Reich was now practically wide open for the third and final phase of operations which would bring about the end of the European War. Naturally, all commanders would seek to make their maximum contribution to bring the struggle to an end as soon as possible. The British had wanted Eisenhower to strengthen Monty's forces so he could drive northwards to Berlin, but with the Allies making strong progress both above and below the Ruhr, Ike knew that German resistance would quickly collapse after the loss of its major war industries. Consequently, the US Ninth Army was transferred back to Bradley's 12th Army Group to balance the Ruhr pincer movement in the north and the south. The British, however, believed it was intended to prevent Monty's drive for Berlin and to reduce them to an unimportant role in obtaining the final victory. According to David Eisenhower, however, "Eisenhower's long-range intentions remained the very ones he had outlined for Montgomery as early as September 1944." But serious difficulties over strategy had been building for some time and would soon become what Irving calls the "nastiest" controversy of *The War Between the Generals*.

At Yalta, Winston Churchill had seen that Franklin Roosevelt's belief that Soviet international cooperation could be counted upon after the war had been

unrealistic and the Prime Minister had second thoughts about the political future of Central Europe. He had become worried about the vacuum the unconditional surrender policy would create which it now appeared would be filled by Soviet Communism. He also realized it was too late to prevent Soviet domination of Eastern Europe but, in view of the newly developing Soviet intransigence in Poland and elsewhere, and in spite of the agreement with the Soviets on the division of Germany, he believed it was important for the Allies to gain the political initiative of having first seized Berlin for leverage against further Soviet non-compliance with the agreements of Tehran and Yalta.

Accordingly, the British, led by Bernard Montgtomery, claimed that Dwight Eisenhower's insistence upon the broad-front attack towards Germany had divided and dissipated rapidly dwindling fuel and supplies which were being hauled long distances from the beaches of Normandy. Monty proposed that if "all supply facilities available" were thrown in support of his Twenty-First Army Group, he would be able to rush forward all the way to Berlin. He believed that the ability of the Germans to throw up an effective resistance had been destroyed and that they were completely demoralized. That if the British could strike quickly with adequate force, the war with Germany could be ended before Berlin could be occupied by the Soviets.

SHAEF's original strategy had called for the Allies to assault Germany all along the "solid front" until the enemy forces had been cleared west of the Rhine. Then, with Montgomery's 21st Army Group in the north occupying the shortest and most direct route to the German capital, his forces would be strengthened with American troops not only to cross the Rhine, but to drive straight to Berlin. After the Battle of the Bulge, Eisenhower not only left the US Ninth Army with Montgomery, but he added to it the US 95th Infantry Division and five artillery batteries from Patton's Third Army. Thus, the British assumed they had at last won the long hard-fought battle led by Brooke and Montgomery against Eisenhower's "dispersion of force," and they were convinced they would bring about a quick and dramatic end to the war while the major American forces continued to defensively hold the existing fronts.

Churchill, Brooke and Montgomery considered it to be all-important that Berlin should be taken by the Allies rather than the Soviets. At Yalta, Churchill having seen more clearly than Roosevelt the aggressive aims of Soviet

Communism, believed it was important both psychologically and politically for the Allies to capture the capital city for leverage against Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe. As the Prime Minister declared, "War is a political instrument. Once its clear that you are going to win, political considerations must influence its further course." For some time a super-secret Operation ECLIPSE had been planned for a combined Allied airborne force to be dropped on Berlin to hasten what was believed to be the imminent collapse of the Third Reich. But, when Josef Stalin learned about it, he immediately directed his generals to rush their massive forces to Berlin ahead of the Allies.

On March 5 when Eisenhower met with Churchill, Brooke and Montgomery, they had assumed that Ike still believed that "Berlin was the main prize." The Prime Minister stated the British belief that Berlin's symbolic importance had to be recognized by the Allied forces since its capture would demoralize the Germans leading to a quick cease-fire. But Ike questioned Berlin's significance to his current operations since the German ministries had been moved out of the city, and pointed out that while the Allies were 300 miles from Berlin, two million Russians were only thirty miles away. The Supreme Commander, being aware that seven million German troops still remained in the field, believed that the current military situation clearly indicated that the Allies' most realistic military objectives involved, first, the capture of the Ruhr, then junction with the Soviets in central Germany, followed by the elimination of German forces in Denmark to the north, and the Alpine-redoubt area in the south. He emphasized that a powerful thrust through central Germany, rather than to the relatively no-longer important capital of Berlin, would more quickly bring about a general German collapse and save more Allied lives. But Brooke renewed his long-standing complaint about the Allied lack of concentration of force and, while unrealistically suggesting that fifty American and French divisions should go on the defensive while Monty dashed towards Berlin, implied that Eisenhower continued to favor the Americans over the British.

But when Hodge's First Army had unexpectedly dashed across the Rhine at Remagen ahead of Montgomery, and Patton, who had complained that the British Field Marshal had already become "bogged down," rushed across the last great barrier just before Monty could launch his great assault "that would end the war," then conditions on the Western Front had suddenly changed dramatically.

The Allies now stood across the Rhine on a "broad front" which dictated the encirclement and capture of 350,000 German troops and Germany's all-important industrial center in the Ruhr. In the meantime, the long-awaited great offensive in the East by the Soviet forces had begun on January 12, and by January 31 the overwhelming Russian armies had driven to the Oder River, only thirty miles east of Berlin. Obviously, almost totally different developments regarding the final phase of the war had dictated the re-evaluation of Allied strategy.

Eisenhower considered it imperative that SHAEF's strategic plan be reviewed. He and Bradley both believed that Berlin no longer was the Allies' major military objective. The city had been almost totally destroyed, it was known that most Nazi activities had been moved out of Berlin, and there was reason to believe the Nazis would make their last stand in a "National Redoubt" in the Bavarian Alps. The writer's job in early 1945 at the headquarters of the First Allied Airborne Army involved helping plan for an airborne drop on the "National Redoubt" which was never needed. So the Russians were sure to reach Berlin in a matter of days and 200 miles still separated the Allies from the German capital. Two powerful but completely different military forces, whose mutual interests were rapidly ending, were rushing head-on towards the same objective. Furthermore, Ike had no intention of changing political decisions which had been decided by the Heads of State at Tehran and Yalta. Factually, Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill had already conceded East Germany to Josef Stalin and, Ike believed, it would be sheer folly to compete with the Soviets for the same military target. Furthermore, the Allied unconditional surrender policy had bound the Eastern and Western Allies to take no independent actions without consultation. Finally, Bradley estimated that an Allied assault on Berlin would cost 100,000 US-British casualties after which "the other fellow" would takeover anyway. Thus rightly, Eisenhower and Bradley concluded that the United States and Britain would not accept such high casualties for a "prestige objective."

The Supreme Commander, therefore, having decided that Berlin had lost its strategic importance, directed that after the Ruhr had been taken by a northern-southern envelopment, Montgomery's forces were to drive in a northwesterly direction toward Hamburg and Kiel to cut-off the German forces in Holland and in Denmark. Bradley's forces would move eastward to meet the Soviets at the Elbe River and then swing to the southwest towards Munich and Austria aimed

at the reduction of the "National Redoubt." These decisions implied that the US Ninth Army would be returned to Bradley, and the British were furious. To Churchill and Brooke, it meant that Monty's great offensive had been canceled, that Britain's political interests were being "overridden and ignored," that Britain would be denied the well-deserved opportunity to make a dramatic and important contribution to the ending of the war, and instead, had been given only a secondary role in the final and most important action of the European war. But David Eisenhower says that Ike had always given a "low priority to Berlin," that his intentions had remained the same as they were in September 1944, when he opposed a single strong attack north of the Ruhr by Montgomery, and that he had consistently favored the envelopment of the Ruhr followed by a northerly and southerly movement of Allied forces.

Of course, Churchill, Brooke and Monty were outraged that there was no mention of Berlin in SHAEF's final plan, and when they learned that SHAEF had sent a message to Stalin advising him of Allied plans, they claimed that Eisenhower had not been authorized to change agreed-upon Allied strategy to turn Berlin over to the Soviets, nor to make direct contact with the Soviet leader. Ike's actions were used to create what David Irving called "the biggest row in Anglo-American relations in months." Stalin had immediately replied and deceitfully advised that since Berlin no longer had its "former strategic importance," only secondary Russian forces would be used against it in mid-May.

Ike denied that he had changed basic strategy and pointed out that his instructions as Supreme Commander included military coordination with the Russians. He said that his plans made no mention of Berlin since it had become "nothing but a geographical location." Churchill, however, continued to complain that the operations of the British Army were being "settled without the slightest reference to any British authority." Eisenhower, always willing to compromise for Allied solidarity, informed the Combined Chiefs of Staff that if they decided that the political aspects of Berlin outweighed military considerations, his plans would be adjusted. There was no response from the Combined Chiefs. The Supreme Commander had believed that the Combined Chiefs had previously approved arrangements for him to coordinate Allied military strategy with the Soviets. Furthermore, George Marshall and the US Chiefs completely supported Ike's plans and his communication with Stalin.

Eisenhower thus felt confident that his actions were proper and would fulfill his principal responsibility—to take whatever military steps the Supreme Commander deemed necessary to bring about the end of armed hostilities as soon as possible.

David Eisenhower, however, cites an allegation made mostly by British historians that Ike had been wrong about Berlin's military importance and that his "broad front" strategy had been responsible for the arrival of the Soviets at the gates of Berlin long before the Allies could get there. The Supreme Commander is further criticized for having concluded that Berlin had lost its military significance and, they contended, that Ike committed his greatest blunder by not having denied the Soviets possession of East Europe, and that he failed to fulfill his fundamental military responsibility to occupy as much as possible of the enemy's areas which would have denied the Soviets control of the countries of East Europe. But the facts indicate that the greatest blunders had already been committed by the American and British heads-of-state. It was much too late for the Allies to even think about military action independent from the Soviets. Winston Churchill, having become convinced that Franklin Roosevelt was set upon giving Josef Stalin just about whatever he wanted in order to gain the international cooperation of the Soviets for world peace and to assist the West in the war with Japan, had agreed with Roosevelt on the commitment to Allied-Soviet cooperation on the conduct of the war against Germany. Furthermore, the division of Germany into occupation zones with Berlin located deep within the Soviet zone had been proposed by the US and Britain as early as July 1943, and during Roosevelt's rapidly declining health after Yalta, little leadership on political and military issues had come from Washington.

Other British historians argue that Berlin could have been captured by the Allies, as proposed by Churchill, Brooke and Montgomery, with minimal losses since the German resistance was concentrated in the East and was practically non-existent after the Ruhr was captured—and the consequences of World War II would have been radically changed. They claim that both psychologically and politically, it would have avoided some of the greatest blunders of World War II, such as: the concession of the Central European vacuum to the Soviet Union; Franklin Roosevelt's award of super-power status to international Communism; the consignment of death and suffering to millions of human beings through

wars of liberation promoted and financed by Soviet Communism; and the wasteful consumption of untold world resources which could have been utilized against hunger and poverty throughout the world. Lastly, a Berlin liberated and held by the Allies backed-up by the greatest military power ever assembled, could have insisted on the enforcement of the agreements of Tehran and Yalta, and the rights of East Europe to be governed democratically could have been preserved. To this day the dispute remains unresolved.

By April 1 the US Ninth Army under Montgomery and the US First Army under Bradley had completed the encirclement of the Ruhr by joining forces at Lippstadt, and three weeks later 325,000 Germans were surrounded and surrendered leaving all of Germany literally open to the Allies. In the meantime, on April 11 the Ninth Army reached the Elbe near Magdeburg, which placed them only fifty-three miles from Berlin which was about midway between Allied and Soviet forces. While they were deep inside the zone earmarked for Soviet occupation, no agreement prevented Berlin from being temporarily occupied by the first forces which could reach it, and General Simpson was ready to go for it. But on April 14, Ike concluded that only spearheads had reached the Elbe and adequate strength was not present for an advance across the river in force. Chester Wilmot claimed that "the Americans were so alarmed at the danger of prolonged resistance in the National Redoubt that Marshall had even urged Eisenhower to direct the main American offensive on Munich, not Dresden."

Once the Soviets had broken through the last major German defense at the Oder on April 16, their overwhelmingly powerful forces reached Berlin five days later and began their final assault on Germany's capital. Simultaneously, the Allied forces began their final movements which would bring the conflict to an end. The Soviets immediately rushed to the Elbe where they met the waiting Americans at Torgau on April 25, while Montgomery's 21st Army Group moved northwards to prevent a Soviet drive from the Elbe up to the Baltic coast. On Montgomery's left, the Canadian 1st Army sealed-off the German Fifteenth Army in Holland, and in the south Patton's Third Army raced into Pilsen, Czechoslovakia and to Linz and Salzburg, Austria. Meanwhile, Patch's Seventh Army occupied Bavaria and, finding that the hold-out in the "National Redoubt" area had been a Nazi hoax perpetrated on the Allies, pushed on to join up with the US Fifth Army coming up from Italy. The French First Army, from

the far right flank of the Allies, moved down and occupied western Bavaria and Austria. As Allied troops quickly overflowed most of Germany, all resistance in the west soon collapsed.

The final Allied military disagreement of the European war involved Churchill's plea to Eisenhower that the Allies should take Prague as the last major capital available. But since powerful Soviet forces were approaching Prague, the British turned Eisenhower's decision to honor the Soviet request not to advance on the Czech capital into another controversial decision. Ike not only wished to avoid becoming involved with the four Russian fronts which were closing-in on Prague, but in accordance with Allied policy, he also wanted to avoid encouraging the Germans to believe that they could benefit from contact with the Allied forces instead of the Soviets. Ike also sought authority to withdraw Allied forces back to the pre-arranged occupations zone upon cessation of hostilities. Churchill opposed that decision as well being convinced that the Soviets would be too exhausted to make such moves immediately, and that a Western Allied agreement to withdraw could be used to force Soviet compliance with previous agreements.

The British argument by Brooke, Wilmot, Irving and Lewin, among others, that Montgomery could have ended the war in Europe sooner had his proposal been approved by Eisenhower for a single powerful drive north of the Ruhr, was based far more on national pride than upon reality. How could a commander who consistently failed to win a major battle in Europe be expected to successfully obtain a victory in the final assault against the fanatically defended Nazi Reich? Had not the Americans proved that with their overwhelming superiority of men and weapons they had been far more successful with aggressive warfare against the Germans? What chance would Montgomery have had against the powerful forces which had just handed him a humiliating defeat at Arnhem and which proved to be still available to Germany by its vicious counterattack in the Ardennes? Moreover, how could it be politically justified that the Americans should agree that Britain with one army in Europe, in addition to the Canadian army, should have the major command responsibility for the assault on Germany when the United States had provided five American armies and the overwhelming majority of weapons and supplies, in addition to much heavier casualties, throughout the conflict in Europe? Nothing less than arrogant conceit could even suggest that the Americans should agree to stand idly by while the most

controversial and disliked commander of World War II should attempt to lead a triumphant British-American force in a dramatic capture of Berlin in the face of massive Russian forces racing pellmell for the Reich capital!

Britain's prolific World War II historian John Keegan says that Montgomery consistently "enjoyed an overwhelming superiority of resources over the enemy and was hardly ever liable to have his plans or operations seriously disturbed by a counter-thrust from El Alamein to the end of the war." He claims that Monty obtained his army's most important command only after the tide had turned for Britain and that his "over-insurance and caution" contributed to his failure to trap Rommel across North Africa in spite of extensive ULTRA intercepts. Keegan also points out that the Allies would have been far better off had Monty been content with clearing the coastal ports and the Scheldt while the US armies, led by Patton and supported by the Allied Airborne, attacked above the Ardennes to cross the Rhine north of the Ruhr. Calling Montgomery's MARKET-GARDEN operation a "major mistake," Keegan contends that Monty's argument for a "single front" attack into Germany cannot be supported considering the military might which remained available to Hitler and which was so powerfully employed in the Battle of the Bulge.

Finally, the British claim that Ike had erred by not sending Allied forces to take Berlin before it could be captured by the Soviets not only ignored the prior Allied agreements with the Soviets but, as David Eisenhower points out, also suggested that the Western Allies could have blocked Soviet gains by a quick and separate peace in spite of Roosevelt's unconditional surrender policy. David adds that would have resulted in one of the most confused and disastrous conflicts imaginable for the Western-Soviet war against Germany and would have, even after the Yalta conference, created insoluble problems raising the possibility of armed conflict with the Soviet Union, the mere idea of which was totally inconceivable and unacceptable to the American and British people.

By late April, the collapse of Germany and the end of the war could no longer be delayed and peace feelers began to appear. First, peace with the Western Allies was obviously proposed to enable the Germans to concentrate their resistance against the Soviets, and was quickly refused. Numerous offers followed to permit the Germans to surrender to the West rather than to the Soviets, but none were accepted. Then the Germans were informed by General Eisenhower that their

only choice was unconditional surrender or complete annihilation. The first capitulation took place in Italy on April 29 with all hostilities to end on May 2. Following Adolf Hitler's suicide in his Berlin bunker on April 30, more surrender offers were made. On May 3 Montgomery was asked to receive the surrender of three armies which had been fighting the Soviets, but Eisenhower had informed his commanders that only "tactical" surrenders of forces in their zones of operations could be accepted. Then on May 4 the surrender of all German forces in northwest Germany, Holland and Denmark was received by Montgomery. In spite of every effort by the Germans to delay the final surrender to permit the greatest possible numbers of German troops to be saved from capture by the Soviets, Supreme Commander Dwight Eisenhower forced the final unconditional and total surrender of all Germans remaining under arms at Rheims, France with all hostilities to cease on May 8. There was immediate joy and celebrations throughout the world. It was "the greatest victory in the history of warfare" George Mashall cabled General Eisenhower, and he praised Ike's triumph over "inconceivable logistical problems and military obstacles," as well as the "courage and wisdom of your military decisions."

Clearly, the greatest blunder of the assault on Germany involved Montgomery's failure to cut-off and eliminate the Fifteenth Army in the Scheldt area which delayed the opening of the port of Antwerp and enabled the Germans to build-up adequate defenses to hold the Allies at the German border. Surprisingly, Eisenhower had erred by giving in to Montgomery's ill-conceived and disastrously executed MARKET-GARDEN operation. Cornelius Ryan said in *A Bridge Too Far* that "All down the Allied line of command the evaluation of its intelligence" was "magnificently bungled." Unquestionably, the American command botched its detection and preparedness responsibilities prior to the "Battle of the Bulge" even though Bradley was correct in saying it was better to have the enemy come out from behind the Siegfried Line so the Allies could get at them. Furthermore, as Corelli Barnett has pointed out, Montgomery bungled mightily when he delayed a counterstroke which would have cut off the escape of most of the enemy in the Bulge. Most importantly, there was no excuse whatsoever for Churchill and Brooke to have supported Montgomery's egomaniacal compulsion to attempt to assume command of the majority of Allied troops and supplies for a totally impractical "grandstand" drive for Berlin. They also badly

erred with their complaints over Ike's broad-front policy and their insistence that Montgomery should take control of the entire Allied ground command.

Providentially, at last the war in Europe, the greatest catastrophe in world history, had ended. Many millions of human beings had been killed and wounded. Untold additional millions of people had been subjected to endless and horrible suffering and misery which would, in many cases, never be ended. The horrors of conflict, death and genocide would scar generations forever and the world would never forget the heinous and unforgivable crimes inflicted upon millions of human beings by the German government, the German military, and the German people. And lastly, the evil and brutal Third Reich, and all the terror which it represented, had been destroyed and the greatest horror ever inflicted upon mankind had been mercifully brought to an end.

It was also the mightiest victory that coalition warfare had ever achieved and it was hoped that would be a basis for the development of international cooperation for world peace. But, in addition to the awesome and destructive wars of liberation that were subsequently inflicted upon mankind by international Communism, alarmingly new and devastating weapons of death and mass destruction had been introduced and, for the first time in history, civilian populations had become major targets in warfare. Although the great conflict in Europe was over, and much of the world lay in chaos, finally the hope of the world had been successfully redirected to the restoration of peace and freedom. No longer, however, could the free world ignore the disturbing fact that the blunders of Western leaders had permitted Soviet Communism to become strongly entrenched across Central Europe as a new superpower. And, unfortunately, it was apparent when Allied troops withdrew from the Soviet zone of occupation in accordance with prior agreements, that the worldwide struggle to preserve freedom and democracy had not been finally won, and that much death, suffering and travail continued to lay ahead in mankind's elusive search for world peace.

Chapter 13

The Yalta Conference

The second and final conference between Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin occurred at Yalta in February 1945 and it is generally considered to have been one of the most controversial events of World War II. In fact, it is widely believed that the decisions made at the Crimea meeting of the Big Three not only created the greatest difficulties for cooperation in bringing the struggle against Nazi Germany to an end, but that it was also responsible for the disastrous consequences following the bitter struggle which destroyed the expectation and opportunity for the establishment of world peace after the war. The reality, however, was that by the time the Yalta Conference occurred deceptions and compromises had already fatally doomed any expectation of peace and security following the worldwide brutal struggle for freedom from totalitarian domination.

At Yalta Franklin Roosevelt had been a gravely ill man who further surrendered important interests of the Western world which enlarged the opportunity for Soviet Communism to displace by force the freedom of the countries of East Europe. And the President has also been charged with the major responsibility for having made it possible for the USSR to have become a "superpower." That, of course, led to the Cold War that divided the world into armed confrontation, destroyed millions of lives amidst great suffering, and created the arms race that wasted vast resources which might have been devoted to the reduction of hunger and suffering that continues to afflict so much of mankind.

However, as we know now, the Yalta Conference was not as important as it has been made out to be. Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin had already largely determined the major political issues which would arise at Yalta. At the first meeting of the "Big Three" at Tehran in 1943, the implications of Roosevelt's demand for a total surrender, his insistence on the postponement of many

political questions, and the generally implied agreement on the partition of Germany and other important issues, had already substantially and fatally set the course for what would follow. Roosevelt's determination to get along with Stalin at whatever cost had led to concessions which had shown the Communist dictator that there would be no substantial opposition by the United States to Russia's political ambitions. Thus the outcome of the major issues at Yalta had been largely predetermined long before the Crimean conference took place and it had largely become too late for Britain and the United States to greatly influence or change the final outcome of the war.

There were numerous questions, however, which still needed to be resolved at the "Big Three" meeting convened only about three months before the war would end. Roosevelt had not only refused to permit the development of specific political goals for the conduct of the war, but fearing Allied disagreements might affect postwar unity, he purposely postponed the resolution of many important problems pending the final surrender. Furthermore, his highest priority involved his intention to gain Josef Stalin's support for his United Nations organization for peace and for the Soviet Union's entry into the war against Japan. Consequently, FDR was determined to avoid any controversies which might disrupt attention from or cause difficulties for his priority issues. Indeed, he refused or failed to vigorously pursue or support other issues of vital importance to the West which undoubtedly could have forestalled Soviet aggressions. Instead, he repeatedly sided with the Soviet dictator against Winston Churchill in a useless and misguided effort to gain the "respect and cooperation" of the Communist dictator.

When Roosevelt had first requested another meeting of the Big Three, the British-American forces were closer to Berlin than were the Soviets. But Stalin craftily waited until his armies were in a more favorable position. When he agreed to meet in Yalta in February 1945, he knew that his new and impressive Soviet victories had greatly increased his political influence while the United States still struggled to clean-up the "embarrassing and bungled" Battle of the Bulge. He also knew that the Allies were not aware how badly Russia had been decimated and that the nation was totally exhausted from its terrible ordeal with the Germans. Obviously, any suggestion that the Soviet Union, which had depended upon Western aid to save Russia, could engage in a military conflict with the overwhelming material power of the United States was unthinkable, and

would likely end in the overthrow of the Communist regime. But the Red Marshal had seen the weakness of the despised Western democracies who had so generously provided the essential means for victory to the Red Army and yet had failed to exact any concessions whatsoever in return. Now he knew he would be able to continue to pull off the most rewarding political bluff in history—and the unrealistic and gullible capitalist President would let him get away with it!

In his inaugural address for his fourth term, the President declared, "We have learned to be citizens of the world, members of the human community." At the Tehran Conference in 1943 he had given Stalin an outline of his ideas for a postwar organization of the United Nations. Thus he set out for Yalta enthusiastically convinced he would successfully launch his new United Nations for world peace. In his view, it was the common goal of mankind, and the Russians who had suffered more than anyone in the war, should want peace most of all. He idealistically believed that true understanding and cooperation had been established between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers which had enabled them to work together to win the war, so it followed that they would also work together to win the peace. His faith in the possibilities of future world peace, like that of Woodrow Wilson, was indomitable. He believed he could trust "Uncle Joe" Stalin and that he could convince the Soviets it was in their best interest to cooperate with the West in building a democratic basis for peace. He overlooked the extent of poverty, the lack of opportunity, and the absence of freedom and democracy in so much of the world because he believed that after the horrors of World War II, all of mankind desired nothing more than to live and work in peace.

While Woodrow Wilson's goals at Versailles had been clear and specific, Roosevelt's goals were vague and unsettled. He had turned down the advice and counsel of his Department of State and he intentionally deferred decisions on the most controversial postwar issues. Unconditional surrender was insisted upon before there could be any peace treaty with Germany and his proposal for a voluntary international peace organization took precedence over the development of an agreement on the future political status of Germany and the nations of East Europe. In effect, so as to gain the support of the Soviet Union for the United Nations and to have them join the fight against Japan, it was said that he was willing to provide all possible aid and assistance to the Soviets and to treat their political and territorial demands as coming from "friendly allies and not by advocates of world revolution."

Before the Yalta meeting it had appeared that President Roosevelt had already conceded to Soviet ambitions when he told Secretary of State Cordell Hull that since it was unknown what the Russians wanted, the United States had to realize that they could do whatever they wished in the areas they occupied, and that there should be no protest unless there was some chance of getting something done about it. He added that since the Russians would hold the power in Central Europe, the United States could not "break" with them so there was no course but to do what could be realistically done to "ameliorate the situation." That, of course, could only mean that he saw his bargaining position as being weak regarding his major interest in the United Nations and help with the war against Japan. But Hull and Roosevelt still believed that if they were "patient and forbearing" they could get along with the Soviets.

How much the attitude of the President and Secretary Hull towards the Soviets was influenced by Harry Hopkins and other liberal socialist-minded Americans in the Roosevelt administration is not fully known. We do know that FDR considered the British to be imperialists who oppressed the peoples of their colonial empire and that throughout the conference he kept apart from Churchill as much as he could. He believed that Britain was a second-rate power, would have little influence on postwar affairs, and he sought further to gain Stalin's trust by confiding in him about his differences with Churchill and by openly expressing his views against colonialism. Since neither Britain nor France would be powers after the war, he felt that the United Nations could not be successful without Soviet support. Moreover, he wanted the Soviet Union in the war against Japan, in spite of the advice of his top Admirals Ernest King, William Leahy and Chester Nimitz, as well as Air Force commander General H. H. Arnold, who believed that "Japan could be forced to accept our terms of surrender by the use of sea and air powers without the invasion of the Japanese homeland." Furthermore, the US Strategic Bombing Survey after the war stated that Japan would have surrendered without the bomb. But Roosevelt insisted that with Russia's help the war with Japan could be ended sooner. Then, the war would be over before the British, Dutch and French would be able to repossess their former colonies.

In July 1944, when the President announced his candidacy for a fourth term, many of his closest associates were surprised at the state of his health. They had

noted his "indifferent attitude," said he felt he was only doing his duty to seek office again and that he really did not seem "to give a damn." They were surprised and concerned about his appearance and saw that he looked ill and emaciated. Even his wife Eleanor commented that "some people thought he looked very ill" before the election. After the inauguration and just before Yalta in January 1945, she said that "it was clearer every day that Franklin was far from well," and that "he had accepted a certain degree of invalidism." And, she added, there were other changes "which we were all so unwilling to acknowledge." Other associates were shocked at his appearance and during the voyage to Yalta Admiral Ernest King was alarmed over the state of FDR's health noting there had been a "serious deterioration." James Byrnes, later to become Secretary of State, accompanied Roosevelt and was disturbed by the President's appearance saying that he was ill during the voyage, held no discussions about the conference, and seldom left his cabin. Byrnes also noted that Roosevelt ignored the State Department briefing books and did little to prepare himself for the important and apparent last meeting of the Big Three. Winston Churchill found the President looking "frail and ill" upon arrival at Yalta and, after the conference, Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, Jr. told General Eisenhower that FDR was "far from well and becoming increasingly difficult to deal with because he changed his mind so often." In consideration of the President's disability, all official conference sessions were held at Roosevelt's residence in the Livadia Palace. Harry Hopkins also was ill at Yalta and attended only the most important meetings.

In anticipation of the conference, Churchill believed the strong bond between the United States and Britain and his friendship with the President called for a prior meeting at Malta to concern their mutual interests. There were important issues and problems to be resolved by the victors since no specific agreements had been made about what to do with Germany after her defeat. Unfortunately, essential issues which had been postponed concerned reparations, dismemberment of Germany, occupation zones, war criminals, the fate of Central Europe, the Soviet role in the war against Japan, future status of France, and the organization of the United Nations. But FDR refused to discuss with the British either tactics or issues prior to the Yalta meeting. Anthony Eden had even suggested that a list be prepared of issues essential to the West and "the prices we were prepared to pay." Some observers concluded that FDR was exhausted by his illness

and that it was known that Roosevelt had decided what he wanted from Stalin, and he was prepared to do whatever was necessary to get it.

In fact, believing that Britain was no longer a world power and would have little influence upon international affairs after the war, Roosevelt sought to further ingratiate himself with Stalin in an effort to prove that the United States could be trusted. He actually went so far as to tell Stalin about his differences with his British ally over colonialism and spheres of influence, as well as about other disagreements with the British Prime Minister. It was an act of bad faith, not only with his coalition partner who shared America's democratic principles and heritage, but also with a trusted and loyal personal friend. William Range says that FDR believed that all societies undergo progressive change, that the Soviets had a good peace record, they were interested only in security and had no aggressive aims, and they knew it was in their best interest to cooperate for peace. Furthermore, Roosevelt had confidence that his powers of personal persuasion had gained the trust and cooperation of Stalin who recognized that the US and the Soviets would be the only two great powers after the war, and since they both wanted peace, they would have to cooperate to get it.

But the reality was that while the President and Stalin shared the same goal of winning the war their motives, of course, were completely different. As an avid admirer of Woodrow Wilson, FDR had surrounded himself with numerous others who advocated internationalism such as Harry Hopkins, Cordell Hull, Averell Harriman, Adolf Berle, and Charles Bohlen as well as those in the State Department who saw the defeat of Germany as the opportunity to create a new international organization capable of maintaining future world peace. Marshal Stalin, on the other hand, saw Germany's elimination as the opportunity for Soviet Communism to fill the vacuum in Central Europe which would enable the Soviet Union to compete in the postwar world with the United States as a co-equal power. He also knew there was only one country that would be powerful enough to deny him his goal—the United States. He could not risk a military confrontation with the Americans and, by any means, a separate treaty between the West and Germany had to be prevented. However, the truth was that after its desperate struggle with the Nazis, the Soviet Union was in no position to be opposed by the unlimited economic and military might of the United States. Therefore, it could only attain its goals with the cooperation of the West.

Winston Churchill had increasingly realized what the Soviets wanted, but Franklin Roosevelt was determined to call the shots which enabled Josef Stalin to obtain his goals for international Communism.

Without an agreed upon agenda, the meeting of the "Big Three" at Yalta was opened informally and, as at Tehran, Stalin suggested that the President preside. The first topic concerned the future of Germany which Stalin raised by asking how Germany was to be dismembered, recalling that at their previous conference the President had suggested that Germany should be divided into five parts with which he had agreed. The Prime Minister, however, had been in favor of dividing Germany into two parts with Prussia, Austria and Bavaria as one part and Westphalia and the Ruhr as the other part, both under international control. Thus, as Zbigniew Brzezinski confirms, the belief that the West accepted the division of Europe at Yalta is a "myth. The fact is that Eastern Europe had been conceded de facto to Josef Stalin as early as the Teheran Conference in November-December 1943" and, according to Winston Churchill, Yalta was "the last gasp of carefully calibrated Soviet diplomacy designed to obtain Anglo-American acquiescence in all of Eastern Europe."

During the Yalta argument over a zone for France, Roosevelt suddenly made another of his costly mistakes by saying that the United States would not keep any substantial armed forces in Germany after the war and that the use of its occupation army could not be expected to last beyond two years. Churchill was astounded realizing that FDR had just voluntarily announced that America would not become involved in European affairs and had confirmed that Stalin had been given a free hand in East Europe. The President had not only turned over at least 100 million people to Communist domination, but he had done so without a single struggle for the cause of freedom in Central Europe. In apparent gratitude for that unexpected and overwhelming bonanza, the Soviet marshal yielded on an occupation zone for France (out of the US and British zones, of course), causing FDR to believe that his great personal persuasive powers had been most effective.

While many of the issues at Yalta were decided either by general agreement or by postponement, it was agreed or generally understood that Germany would be divided into sectors to be occupied by the victorious powers and would be governed by an Allied Control Commission; an occupation zone and a seat on the

Control Commission was given to France; the principle of reparations to the Soviet Union was recognized; a Commission on reparations was set-up by secret protocol; war criminals would be tried by an international court of justice; the Baltic States and East Poland were ceded to Russia; certain areas of Germany were ceded to Poland; the Soviet Union would participate in the United Nations organization; Roosevelt's Declaration on Liberated Europe was adopted calling for freely elected representative governments; free elections would be held in Poland; and secretly, Roosevelt negotiated an agreement with Stalin for Russia to enter the war against Japan and for the Soviets to obtain territorial expansions in the Far East.

It was further agreed that the Allied Powers who had cooperated to win the war would work together in the future to maintain peace, that there would be mutual endeavors in the liberated countries "to create democratic institutions of their own choice," and that new interim governments would be established "broadly representative of all democratic elements...through free elections." It was also agreed that the cooperative joint control of Germany would follow the war and the Soviets would fully support the development and enforcement of future world peace through the United Nations. Unquestionably, the Americans were guilty either of incredible naivety or Roosevelt was intentionally misled by his advisors. Before the war the Poles and other East European states knew that to permit Soviet troops to enter Poland would mean permanent occupation and the British knew that occupation by Soviet troops in East Europe would result in the loss of freedom. But between Tehran and Yalta, Franklin Roosevelt gave Josef Stalin everything he wanted for which the West would pay an awesome price.

For the President and his closest advisors the most important accomplishment at Yalta involved the general agreement concerning the organization of the United Nations. The greatest difficulty related to the right of veto by permanent members of security council actions. In a major assault upon the principle of democratic freedom, the Soviets feared other nations might combine against them and demanded an absolute veto. As an ambiguous compromise, it was agreed that discussions would not be subject to the veto and that permanent members would abstain on actions relating to the peaceful settlement of disputes to which they were a party. After initially asking for sixteen votes pertaining to the "nations" under their domination, the Soviet Union was finally given three

votes and, in a secret agreement, the President asked for, and was given, three votes for the United States should he need to defend his agreement of three votes for the Soviets. Lastly, the organizing meeting of the UN was set for San Francisco on April 25, 1945 and only states that declared war against Germany could participate.

After Yalta the President and his associates, as well as the Soviets, considered that they had won agreement on the issues that were most important to them and that compromise had been necessary only on issues of lesser importance. The United States had gained agreement on Roosevelt's two priority issues of Soviet participation in the United Nations and Stalin's agreement to enter the war against Japan. But the American concessions facilitated the Soviet control of Central Europe, gave the Soviets an important forum and vote in the United Nations, and expanded the Soviet presence into the Far East. Communist Russia also gained its goals for improving its security by acquiring buffer states between it and Germany; greatly increased opportunities for the expansion of Communism; possession of the Baltic states; occupation of East Germany, Poland and other East European countries; and even occupation and control of new areas in the Far East. It's only concessions were minor ones such as some moderation of reparations; agreeing to a French sector taken out of the American and British occupation zones; support for the United Nations; and agreeing to enter the war against Japan. James MacGregor Burns said, "Roosevelt, as always, was acting pragmatically, opportunistically, tactically. He was almost wholly concerned about the immediate job ahead—winning the war."

The President's defenders argue that by the time of Yalta the Soviet occupation of Central Europe was a fait accompli and there was little that the United States could do but make the best deal possible with Stalin. That may have been true at Yalta, but Roosevelt's great blunder had occurred at Tehran. At Yalta as the end of the war approached, it was too late to save the fate of East Europe and to have avoided the Cold War. The President had consistently ignored the Department of State and Harry Hopkins, the former social worker, had largely shaped American policy vis-a-viz the Soviet Union. It is unlikely we shall ever know how much Alger Hiss, who was convicted of perjury in a trial for transmitting government documents to the Soviets, and other liberal Roosevelt advisors

influenced the tragic consequences of the subsequent worldwide conflicts resulting in great loss of life and freedom to international Communism.

Generally, many historians claim that Roosevelt accomplished his major goals at Yalta and conceded only those issues which he was unable to change, with the exception of his mistakes regarding the Far East. Stalin was credited with having obtained only what he already possessed and was convinced by the President to agree to cooperate in the founding of the United Nations and to participate in the war against Japan. The fact is, however, that Josef Stalin left Yalta with everything that was really important to the Soviet Union and he made concessions to the West on such questions as the United Nations and an occupation zone for France which were not important to the Soviets. His so-called greatest "concession" was to enter the war against Japan which he knew already had been won. He actually got all that he really wanted including the assurance that the West would not militarily oppose his occupation of Central Europe, confirmation of his "right" to absorb the Baltic States and East Poland into the Soviet Union, and knowledge that the West would be unable to prevent him from setting-up Communist governments in East Europe. Under his leadership, Soviet Russia had suddenly become one of the world's two greatest powers with the potential to convert much of the world to Communism.

Sumner Welles, Roosevelt's Undersecretary of State, said that the Soviet domination of Central Europe could have been prevented if FDR had followed the advice of the Department of State. Furthermore, it is clear that had Roosevelt not been so preoccupied with the success of his propaganda proclamation of unconditional surrender, the result of World War II would have been vastly different. Had he not opposed negotiations with, and support of the dissidents in Germany, Hitler could have been deposed and the war ended perhaps as much as two years earlier, not only saving millions of lives, but would have denied Communist occupational control of one hundred million people in the "Captive Nations" of Europe. While there is little dispute today over the moral and political correctness of Franklin Roosevelt's leadership in bringing America into World War II against the Nazi domination of Europe, the justification for Roosevelt's subjugation of democratic principles and American political interests in support of the political and military domination of Central Europe by Soviet Communism is both morally and politically indefensible. Again, the shipment of

American aid to the Soviets should have been used to obtain leverage for vital Western political interests. Since Stalin had made the most of the possibility of a separate peace between the Soviet Union and Germany, he very much feared a separate peace in the West knowing that the Germans preferred to surrender to the United States and Great Britain. In any case, no important political agreements should have been made with a dictatorial regime which could not be trusted. Lastly, a reference to an intention to continue the presence of Allied power in Europe should have been revealed as a Soviet deterrence and, if all else had failed, the threat of the potential use of American military power could have been implied, particularly since Stalin's spies had already informed him that America would soon possess the atom bomb. In fact, Edgar Eugene Robinson quotes from the US Senate Hearings on Military Situation in the Far East (Page 3119): "General Graves (Groves) on June 25, 1951, stated that he and Secretary Stimson had informed the President just before he left for Yalta that the atomic bomb was 'a 99% certainty, and [would] be ready in August.'"

In January 1945 Averill Harriman had notified Washington that the Soviets placed "high importance on a large postwar credit as a basis for the development of Soviet-American relations." Russian civilian life could not be restored and her industrial capacity would remain inoperative without substantial financial assistance. In addition to the overwhelming death of an estimated thirty million soldiers and civilians, the cities of Minsk and Stalingrad, 1,700 towns, 70,000 villages, 30,000 industrial plants and 40,000 miles of railroad had been destroyed. Half of Russia's agricultural production had been eliminated and the entire Soviet economy had to be revived. It should have been evident to the Americans that the Soviet Union would be near total exhaustion at the end of the war, yet there is no evidence that the use of economic leverage against the Soviets was ever even considered by the President and his advisors until after the threat of Soviet dominance had become self-evident. Apparently, no thought was given to any hardball tactics to force such Soviet concessions as free elections in East Europe, withdrawal of Soviet armed forces from occupied areas, recognition of former boundaries, and other issues important to the West. To the contrary, some historians have argued that the Russians intended to comply with the Yalta agreements, but since they knew about the atom bomb at Yalta which Roosevelt

had not told them about, they concluded the Americans were not trustworthy and thus began to be uncompromising and deceitful which led to the Cold War.

Lord Moran, Churchill's physician at Yalta reported, "Everyone seemed to agree that the President had gone to bits physically...I doubt, from what I have seen, whether he is fit for his job here," and "to a doctor's eyes, the President appears a very sick man. He has all the symptoms of hardening of the arteries of the brain and in an advanced stage, so that I give him only a few months to live." He also said, "I don't think that he has ever grasped that Russia is a Police State in which freedom is more at a discount than Hitler's Germany," and he noted that Stalin's deference to Roosevelt was obvious throughout the conference. Harry Hopkins, FDR's principal advisor, was also gravely ill. Moran went to see Hopkins at Yalta and said that he was "in a poor way. Physically he is only half in this world. He looked ghastly..." Winston Churchill told Moran that the President was "behaving very badly," and that "He won't take any interest in what we are trying to do." Lastly, Moran observed that "Roosevelt is a sick man—the Americans round him do not seem to realize how the President has split the democracies and handcuffed the P.M. in his fight to stem Communism. They cannot see that he is playing Stalin's game." Churchill's battle was grievously undercut, Moran reported, as the Prime Minister saw Europe being "redrawn in red ink," and that even at Tehran in 1943, the P.M. was feeling "his own impotence..."

Aside from his illness at Yalta, it was observed that Roosevelt appeared to be resigned and passive about the Soviet's new status as a world power. Cardinal Francis Spellman revealed that the President had told him at the Quebec Conference in August 1943 that, "The world will be divided into spheres of influence: China get's the Far East; the US, the Pacific; Britain and Russia, Europe and Africa. But as Britain has predominately non-European interests, it might be presumed that Russia will predominate Europe." Furthermore, Cardinal Spellman said that Roosevelt hoped that, "although it might be wishful thinking, Russian intervention in Europe would not be too harsh."

In spite of Roosevelt, Churchll had fought valiantly against the Soviet domination of Europe. He had continuously argued for the Anglo-American forces to attack Germany through the Balkans. While he represented that such action would provide relief for the Soviets, his major intention was to deny the Soviets

occupation and political control of Central Europe. Not only did Stalin oppose such actions but Roosevelt and his military advisors fought Churchill's proposals for Allied offensive actions in the Mediterranean area almost from the beginning of the Anglo-American coalition. However, with the convincing argument that the most direct and quickest route to Berlin was through France, the Americans insisted that Allied assets should be divided between the Italian and the French campaigns which unquestionably lessened the effectiveness of both campaigns and unnecessarily postponed Germany's surrender.

Author Robert Sherwood attempted to dismiss accusations that the President was a dying man at Yalta who surrendered vital Western interests to the Soviets. Although he said that "Roosevelt had been prepared even before the Tehran Conference in 1943 to agree to the legitimacy of most if not all of the Soviet claims in the Far East," Sherwood contends that FDR was in full command of himself and his faculties at Yalta and that he committed his most "assailable" error by signing a secret agreement with Stalin on the Far East only at the end of many days of rigorous negotiations to gain Russia's entry into the war with Japan. He also claimed that most of the criticism aimed at the President arose over his agreement for the Soviets to have two additional votes in the United Nations and that members of the Security Council could veto issues which involved themselves. American delegation member Charles Bohlen believed that "one solid and lasting decision at Yalta involved the veto limitation in the UN Security Council otherwise the UN would have been blocked by the Soviets and unable to discuss any issue to which they were opposed."

After the conference Roosevelt and Hopkins believed with "extreme exultation" that Yalta was a great success for the United States and Churchill said the same for Britain. Naturally, as two very experienced politicians they presented the results of the conference as being highly favorable to the interests of their respective countries. Harry Hopkins reported that, "The Russians had proved that they could be reasonable and farseeing and there wasn't any doubt in the minds of the President of any of us that we could live with them and get along with them peacefully as far into the future as any of us could imagine...Stalin. We felt sure that we could count on him to be reasonable and sensible and understanding." Hopkins also added that after Yalta FDR believed that the USSR and the USA

could work together in peace as they had in war and that the President had often expressed how much respect and admiration he had for Stalin.

Upon his return to Washington the President reported to Congress, but he remained seated and he was deliberately deceitful. After having entered into secret written agreements with the Soviets, which remained hidden in his White House safe from his own advisors as well as the American public, and after having arbitrarily decided with Stalin the fate of countries in Central Europe and Asia, he told the cheering legislators that Yalta meant "the end of the system of unilateral action, exclusive alliances, spheres of influence, and balances of power…there will be a more stable political Europe than ever before." Not only had FDR just been engaged in secret negotiations with the Soviets on unilateral actions involving spheres-of-influence and balances of power, he also knew that the Soviets were already busy ignoring and violating their agreement to the Declaration for Liberated Europe and their support for the principles and aims of the United Nations, as well as their agreements at the Yalta Conference itself. Meanwhile, Churchill was also busy presenting his spin on Yalta by declaring in the House of Commons: "The impression I brought back from the Crimea…is that Marshal Stalin and the Soviet leaders wish to live in honorable friendship and equality with the Western democracies. I feel also that their word is their bond."

At first the American people were pleased to be told that Yalta had obtained important decisions which would favorably "influence the future of the world." Hopkins said that the Soviets had positively responded to reason and that Roosevelt was convinced that he could "live at peace with them." The British, however, had an entirely different view as to what happened at Yalta. They believed the conference had been completely different from what it was made to appear. Roosevelt's mistakes and blunders were too serious and too numerous to have been labeled as "good intentions." They felt it indicated the tremendous ego of a person with great confidence that his personal powers of charm and persuasion would overcome all evil and deceit to advance the cause of peace and justice for all men. That while it was a noble aspiration by a great and successful politician, unfortunately, it was not the performance of a statesman. It is widely recognized that great causes in the hands of politicians have little lasting effect for their trade is expediency. Sadly for America and for the cause of democratic freedom, Franklin Roosevelt's conduct of American wartime policies was a highly unfortunate expediency which led to catastrophic consequences for all of mankind.

FDR had thought that he could manipulate Stalin, but he out-manipulated himself instead. He was naively convinced that he could get Stalin to do as he wished, and in so doing, he compromised the very principles upon which he had built his worldwide moral leadership. Millions of innocent human beings would lose their lives and much of the world's freedom would be subjected to the atheistic ideology of Communism which would plunge many parts of the world into revolution and armed conflict. George N. Crocker writes that Roosevelt, "Cocksure, ill-prepared, and, as at Tehran, with no strategy beyond his obsession that the important thing was for Stalin to 'like' him, he went to Yalta and engaged himself, while deathly ill, in an ostentatious spectacle of personal power and vanity." Within weeks after Yalta, every important question openly agreed upon had been disregarded or violated by the Soviet Union.

It was not long before the facts on Yalta were revealed and the American public began to be disillusioned upon learning the truth. There was a great outcry when the media revealed the "sellout to Russia" on the veto in the United Nations. And it soon became apparent that Stalin never had any intention of abiding with the agreement regarding free elections and self-government for the occupied states of Central Europe. In fact, the conference was barely over when the Soviets were already setting-up Communist governments and were blocking the agreed-upon provisional government in Poland. Then the American people began to see Yalta as a "monstrous fraud" and that Roosevelt and Churchill had permitted the Communist dictator to make them "unwitting dupes." To make things worse, the President confidentially informed his delegation to the organizing meeting of the United Nations at San Francisco that the United States and Britain had agreed to support the Russian request for three votes, and in return the Russians would support three votes for the United States, if requested. That revelation of secret dealings with the Soviets at Yalta created a furor and FDR was lambasted for the "ridiculous" suggestion that the United States would unfairly claim three votes in the United Nations. Then, when Roosevelt died shortly thereafter and the details of the secret Far Eastern deals with Stalin were found hidden in the White House safe, the public was outraged over FDR's "secret and shameful" manipulations with the Soviet Union. Increasingly the word "Yalta" has signified to the American public either the intentional endangerment of vital

national interests or the stupifyingly misdirected leadership of an otherwise competent American President.

The President's principal blunder involved his refusal to recognize that wars are fought for political, as well as military, purposes. His errors and mistakes were many and were mostly intentional including his rejection of the planning, experience and talents available at the State Department; his refusal to face up to and deal with the importance of postwar conditions in Europe; his failure to understand and avoid the consequences of the occupation of the liberated areas by Soviet military forces; his opposition to Churchill's initiatives to deny Soviet possession of Central Europe; his declaration of, and refusal to modify, the policy of "unconditional surrender" which acted negatively against Western postwar interests; his refusal to recognize, encourage or assist the opposition to Adolf Hitler in Germany; his ineffectual efforts to use moral persuasion to prevent the Communist conversion of East Europe; and his general failure to utilize political leverage and other alternative actions to avert the aggrandizement of Soviet Communism in countries throughout the world..

Less than a month before the total surrender of Germany, when the Soviets were massed in readiness for the final assault on Berlin and had already occupied most of Central Europe, President Franklin Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945. One hour before he died, FDR was still captivated with the idea that the Soviets could be persuaded to cooperatively pursue Western ideals for international peace and security. He had just sent a note to Winston Churchill instructing the British Prime Minister to "minimize the general Soviet problem as much as possible" for, as the President believed, "most of them always straighten out." Franklin Roosevelt was obsessed by his dream that the United States and the Soviet Union would work together to establish and maintain world peace. But Churchill immediately sent FDR's successor Harry Truman a cable expressing his profound misgivings about the withdrawal of American forces "to our line of occupation in the central sector of Germany, thus bringing Soviets into the heart of Western Europe, and the descent of an iron curtain between us and everything to the Eastward. Nothing really important has been settled yet and you and I will have to bear great responsibility for the future." Truman, in his typical limited but blunt fashion, replied that Roosevelt's agreement for occupation zones would not be repudiated.

William Range held that FDR's goal of a "global New Deal" held no fear or objection to the promotion of Socialism which would occupy a good part of the world after the war and to which he would have no regrets. Sumner Welles believed the United States could have obtained the Soviet's cooperation on a world "structured along American ideals" if Roosevelt had utilized the power of US aid before the build-up of the Red Army. He said that when important political decisions were postponed by FDR, ongoing problems were handled in a haphazard manner without preparation or discussion. Welles also claimed that if American leverage had been used before 1943 it probably would have been conclusive. But Roosevelt's concentration on military objectives while ignoring the implications of important political issues was, in the opinion of historian Gaddis Smith, "a fantastic blunder of catastrophic magnitude."

Regarding the Roosevelt-Hopkins view of the Soviet Union, Smith asserts that they held the belief that Russia had been so misunderstood and maligned that special efforts had to be made to rebuild her image and regard. They believed the Soviets wanted to be friendly with the US and Britain and that their valiant struggle and heavy losses against the Nazis deserved new and better attitudes by the American people. In view of such sacrifices, they felt that a failure to be friendly and sympathetic would result in continued strained and suspicious relations in the future, and that Russia's major concern was for her future security which could be granted since her minimal territorial claims had been previously established.

Various historians have observed that Roosevelt and his advisors failed to properly represent American ideals and motives in their relations with both the Soviet Union and Great Britain, that the conduct of American wartime diplomacy was based on self-deceiving idealism rather than factual reality, and that with the total conviction that only they were right, they naively expected the British and the Soviets to want the same kind of postwar world. Wrong about that, they also proved to be wrong in their belief that the people of the United States would object to an American military and economic involvement in the complicity of European security after the war. They also failed to anticipate the strong support and leadership the American people would give to the United Nations. The fact was that the "nobless oblige" character of Franklin Roosevelt had prevented him from changing his convictions and caused him to reject differing opinions by others regarding major wartime questions. At Yalta he

foolishly supported Stalin against Britain with his hard-headed attitude towards Germany regarding unconditional surrender, dismemberment, and reparations.

The only issue in which the two Western partners put up even the suggestion of a unified struggle against the Soviets related to free elections in Poland. But even then Roosevelt failed to stand firm for the traditional Western principles of freedom. He was so concerned about not offending the Soviets that he refused to pursue the State Department's recommendation for a High Commission to supervise the requirement for free elections in accordance with the Declaration on Liberated Europe. In fact, the Declaration had been deceitfully agreed to by the Red Marshal who, like most Communists, believed that such statements were useful for propaganda purposes only. Thus the declaration at Yalta became another of Roosevelt's high-sounding pronouncements which would have no influence whatsoever on the Soviet Union's brutal imposition of Communism upon the formerly free states of Central Europe. And another tragic blunder occurred, according to Diane Clemens, when Roosevelt accepted the Soviet proposal on Poland in trade for Stalin's agreement on voting at the United Nations. Clemens states that Poland's tragedy was "less the agreement at Yalta than that no agreement was reached before Yalta." Renowned historian Herbert Feis concluded that regarding both "Britain and America at Yalta…They were paying the full price for coalition and Soviet military cooperation."

The US State Department had also initially opposed the dismemberment of Germany on the basis that "The only effective check on Russia would be a strong central European unit," and that partition would be an incentive for the Germans to make future war. The position was maintained through 1942, but Roosevelt and many others, believed that if the Versailles treaty had not left Germany as a unified state, there would have been no World War II. Therefore, believing that Russia would insist on partition, in November 1943 FDR told the Joint Chiefs without notifying State, that he favored splitting Germany into three or more parts. Then at Tehran, just as State was prepared to support a unified Germany, the President suddenly volunteered his independent idea that Germany should be divided into five parts. Churchill, however, suggested an alternative plan to divide Germany into two major parts, but Stalin, of course, preferred the President's plan which would most weaken Germany. The consensus seemed to have been that partition would be required to "end the German

menace," and since there was no agreement on such a complicated issue, it was merely referred to the European Advisory Committee for study.

While Roosevelt is rightly criticized for his questionable power dealing at Yalta, Winston Churchill had demonstrated his power skills as well by taking on the "Devil Personified" during a visit to Moscow in October 1944. As co-dealers in spheres-of-influence par excellence, C.L. Sulzberger provides written evidence of Churchill's secret agreement with Stalin to share their respective big power influence in Central European states with Roumania at 90% Russia and 10% others; Greece at 90% Great Britain and 10% Russia; Yugoslavia at 50/50%; Hungary 50/50%; and Bulgaria at 75% Russian and 25% others. It was a shocking demonstration of the use of arbitrary power in the determination of the status of national freedom and the application and influence of improper and unauthorized power. Before Churchill left Moscow, Stalin also informed him that "the Soviet Union would take the offensive against Japan three months after Germany's defeat, provided the United States would assist in building up the necessary reserve supplies and provided the political aspects of Russia's participation had been clarified." He also gave an assurance, as on five other occasions in 1944, that American forces would be permitted to use air and naval bases in the Siberian Maritime Provinces, which was later withdrawn probably for trading purposes at Yalta.

As early as 1941 Stalin had offered Britain a trade of spheres-of-influence. If the British would recognize the Soviet Union's right to the Baltic states, part of Finland, east Poland and Bessarabia, the Soviets would support any special need the British might have for bases or other security purposes in Western Europe. The British reaction was said to be "mixed." Anthony Eden remarked that "Soviet policy is amoral, United States policy is exaggeratedly moral, at least where non-American interests are concerned." In April 1942 Churchill had written FDR that "the increasing gravity of the war" indicated that the Charter "ought not to be constructed so as to deny Russia the frontiers she occupied when Germany attacked her."

Some American revisionists hold that Roosevelt should have known that the Soviets, and not the Germans, were the most serious threat to Anglo-American postwar interests, and that the President and his advisors critically miscalculated Soviet ambitions during wartime diplomacy. They contend that the President

ignored Western interests by deliberately postponing the political consequences of military actions and by using his "policy of appeasement" which enabled the Red dictator to falsify his support for Communism's greatest gains in history. However, Secretary of State Stettinius claimed that the Soviets made more concessions than the Americans, and many American scholars argued that while the Yalta agreements turned out to be unfavorable, at the time they were realistic under the prevailing circumstances. Robert A. Divine argues that Russia's victories had factually changed the balance of world power, and the Western powers had to either accept Soviet aggressions, or be willing to go to war again. Judged under those conditions, Divine asserts that Roosevelt's conduct of America's foreign policy was successful in that it maintained the unity of the Allied alliance and won the war. The revisionists, however, counter by charging that the greatest blunder involved Roosevelt's intentional refusal to successfully employ America's superior economic, military and political, as well as moral, power to impose early political agreements which would have led to a negotiated surrender of Germany, ended the war before and without the Soviet occupation of East Europe, avoided the partition of Germany, and prevented the Soviet domination of much of Europe.

The attitude of Roosevelt, Hopkins and their advisors about the Soviets was inexcusably wrong and completely contrary to convincing evidence as to the real character of their motives and behavior. The Soviets demanded aid from the West as a right and were difficult and uncooperative regarding US Lend-Lease assistance throughout the war. American aid representatives in the Soviet Union were subjected to harassment and indignities and the Soviets consistently refused to provide information involving their needs and resources to enable a more efficient and effective administration of the assistance. They consistently refused to reveal to the United States and Britain the consequences or their intentions concerning the honest status and conduct of their struggle with Germany. Their outright demands and recriminations over the "Second Front" indicated suspicions, distrust, complaints and insults that suggested the Allies were intentionally refusing to do all they could to defeat Germany. Even threats were made that Western failures to fulfill their commitments might seriously affect Russia's war efforts and her support for building peace. Then as the Allied cross-channel attack was postponed to 1944 because of a shortage of landing craft, Stalin charged Britain

and America with "deliberate bad faith," and when Italy surrendered the Soviets were furious that they had not been fully consulted.

Particularly, FDR's concessions to the USSR in the Far East became another highly controversial action of Yalta. It had begun with the unprecedented bungling of the American Chiefs of Staff who grossly exaggerated the consequences of the final assault upon the Japanese mainland when, in fact, Japan was on the brink of total collapse. They concluded that an invasion of Japan would cost up to 200,000 American casualties and they projected up to 1,000,000 American dead and wounded in a campaign which could go on to 1947. All the while Roosevelt knew that the atom bomb would soon be available and that his admirals and Arnold had told him that the air and sea might of America could force a surrender without an invasion. Moreover, according to General Bonner Fellers, Douglas MacArthur advised Roosevelt before the Yalta conference that unofficial Japanese peace overtures had been received which accepted unconditional surrender subject to the retention of the Emperor. So it was not so much that the Soviets were needed to win over Japan as it was FDR's determination to give the Soviets whatever they wanted in the mistaken belief he would obtain their support and cooperation to establish his revered plan for a United Nations. But the deception had been so complete that in reality the Soviets would ruthlessly use the UN not for world peace but to help them wage international war and revolution to advance Communist imperialism.

However, the suggestion that Franklin Roosevelt would willingly sacrifice human lives and suffering in order to help the Soviets gain the opportunity to spread revolution and Communism in East Europe and in many parts of the world is appalling, and is rejected. Although Sherwood says that Roosevelt had been prepared even before the Tehran Conference in 1943 "to agree to the legitimacy of most if not all of the Soviet claims in the Far East," it is clear that he had no idea that Soviet ambitions would not be changed by the terrible tragedy of the decimation of Russia by Hitler's brutal Nazi legions. Not unlike any good American in those days, he expected that as the head of state for the Russian people the word of Marshal Stalin, who had gratefully admitted that without American aid Russia could not have survived, could be relied upon. Actually, both Roosevelt and Churchill were totally shocked after Yalta to suddenly learn that the Soviets had abandoned specific agreements for free elections and were

setting up Communist controlled governments in the Soviet occupied countries of East Europe. They objected, of course, but after the fact, what else could they do? The damage had been done much earlier, and with their knowledge, if not their consent. Should they go to war with the Soviets to force them out of the area? The Soviets knew the answer. It was out of the question.

In Asia the situation was vastly different. In return for Stalin's agreement to enter the war against Japan "within 2-3 months" after the end of the European war, FDR not only gave Communist Russia everything they asked for, but he made no effort at all to resist Stalin's blackmail and, perhaps worse of all, he did it secretly. Either he had no concern for the political consequences of his concessions or he was being influenced by advisors who were either incompetent or disloyal. Not only did Roosevelt approve Stalin's demand for huge quantities of equipment for the Soviets "to use against Japan," he also agreed to recognize the Soviet occupation of Outer Mongolia, the return of the Kuriles and the southern half of Sakhalin from Japan, and granted the Soviets the dominant interest in the internationalized port of Dairen, and the use of Port Arthur as a naval base. Most damaging to the future of China, however, the Soviets were given a major stake in the Manchurian railways which not only would prevent China from maintaining its sovereign control over Manchuria, but doomed much of Southeast Asia to the terrible ravages of Communist conquest.

Roosevelt also secretly agreed to obtain China's approval of the Far Eastern agreements and, as Sherwood pointed out, "if China had refused to agree to any of the Soviet claims, presumably the US and Britain would have been compelled to join in enforcing them." Finally, the crafty Red Marshal required both Roosevelt and Churchill to sign their willingness to enforce the agreement which was kept secret. Eden attempted to persuade the Prime Minister not to sign it but Churchill felt he had no choice since "the whole position of the British Empire in the Far East might be at stake." As Charles Bohlen would write about the Far East agreements, the major tragedy was that "it turned out to be completely unnecessary" because of the American possession of the atom bomb.

The President considered the conference at Yalta to have been highly successful since he believed that he had accomplished his most important goals. He was elated that he had succeeded in getting his commitment from Stalin to attack Japan which would force unconditional surrender upon the Japanese. And, as a

dedicated Wilsonian internationalist, he was delighted to have gained Stalin's support for his United Nations which he idealistically believed would, at last, overcome the evils of balances of power and spheres-of-influence which had brought so much misery to the world. In reality, with Roosevelt teaming up with Stalin against Britain's traditional interests, Winston Churchill gained little at Yalta except to give France an increased role in European affairs as a buffer against Soviet dominance, along with his success in obtaining votes in the UN for each of the British Commonwealth nations. Josef Stalin, however, was the big winner not only for his substantial gains in the Far East, but also for recognition of his demands for the partition and occupation of Germany, reparations for the Soviet Union, passive Western attitudes toward the Soviet's newly acquired aggressive power, and most importantly, voluntary indications of no Western interventions against the sovietization of the "Captive Nations."

The fundamental blunder of the internationalists Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Hopkins was their naive assumption that Josef Stalin had no imperialist ambitions and their belief that the Communists would support and abide by the same democratic and moral principles which would be necessary as the basis for the establishment of world peace. Furthermore, as the consummate politician, Roosevelt was so confident of his personal abilities to generate trust and compromise that he sincerely, if wrongly, believed the Americans and the Soviets alike would place all selfish interests aside and cooperate in mankind's mutual and historic search for peace. In fact, former Prime Minister Stanislaw Mikolajczyk of Poland reported that President Roosevelt had told him that "Stalin is a realist...of one thing I am certain, Stalin is not an Imperialist." FDR was convinced that there could be no problem which he and Stalin could not resolve on a "man-to-man basis." Secretary Hull believed that the United States "must and could get along" with the Soviets if the US was "patient and forbearing." After Yalta Harry Hopkins wrote that the Russians "like the United States. They trust the US more than they trust any other power in the world...above all, they want to maintain friendly relations with us...They are tenacious, determined people who think and act just like you and I do." Even at Yalta, after extensive discussions over the survival of freedom in Poland, Roosevelt had sent Stalin a letter saying, "I am determined there shall be no breach between ourselves and the Soviet Union." It

was as if he had said "anything you want—is OK with me, so long as we don't fight about it."

Although Roosevelt and Churchill were in general agreement at Yalta on such issues as partition, reparations and a zone for France, as the chairman of the official sessions, the President attempted where possible to take intermediate positions on the issues being discussed. His well-established partnership with Britain had reached a sensitive stage as he had indicated his opposition to balances-of-power and spheres-of-influence, and his principal interest in Germany was to use his vote to maximize the USSR support for the United Nations and the war against Japan. In line with the President's views, the Americans considered that Britain was much more interested in preserving her empire than in defeating Japan and consequently, Great Britain was denied major roles in Pacific operations in order to prevent them from claiming their former colonies after the defeat of the Japanese. In fact, Chester Wilmot reports that the United States informed the British that they could not repossess their former colonies before the final surrender was executed. Still, as James Byrnes saw it, the Soviets had little interest in the new UN organization. Obviously, FDR's belief that their support was essential had given the Soviets such great leverage that Stalin was able to use it for almost unlimited power and influence at Yalta.

Yet at Yalta, the western delegations and observers were highly pleased over so-called Soviet compromises on the UN and the war against Japan, and convinced themselves that the President had brought about a fundamental change in Soviet attitudes and aims. In politics and public affairs, it is naive and foolish, in the least, not to assume that each side to every issue will act in what it believes to be its own best interest, and as a matter of fact, in foreign affairs it is their duty to do so. As should have been anticipated, the disastrous consequence of World War II for the democracies clearly indicates that the Soviet "concessions" at Yalta were simply political manipulations to gain Western support or acquiescence on issues deemed to be of vital importance to Soviet intentions. For instance, Russian "concessions" on the question of free elections and an independent government in Poland were completely false and without meaning, since the Western powers obviously had compromised their positions, and the Soviet control of Poland had become a fact. The Soviet Union did what it should have been expected to do. The unforgivable blunder was that Roosevelt, and to a lesser degree Churchill,

were mere politicians who failed to become statesmen and permitted once again, as Wilson had in 1919, for reality to be obscured by idealism resulting in the worst of folly.

The fundamental conflict between democratic and communist ideology should have made it apparent that only temporary cooperation was possible between East and West under the mutual threat of Nazi domination. Franklin Roosevelt and his advisors, refusing to face obvious realities, committed the most disastrous blunders in assuming that the Soviets could be diverted from their commitment to Communism to work cooperatively and constructively in building a peaceful world based on democratic principles. That was the ultimate folly! Roosevelt's fallacious and most damaging assumptions that resulted in the tragic aftermath of World War II were: (1) That the Soviet Comintern had permanently abandoned militantly aggressive Communism; (2) That he and Stalin understood each other and that he could trust the Communist dictator; (3) That the Soviets would support and cooperate with an international organization for world peace organized on democratic principles; (4) That there was a danger of a separate peace between the USSR and Nazi Germany; and (5) That Russia was needed to win the war with Japan. But to really show what the Red marshal thought of his Western allies, he had also told Yugoslav Milovan Djilas that the English "find nothing sweeter than to trick their allies...And Churchill? Churchill is the kind who, if you don't watch out, will slip a kopek out of your pocket...Roosevelt is not like that. He dips in his hand for the bigger coins."

Prior to Yalta, America's goals were largely undefined and Roosevelt policies were described as being "unknown, unclear or even contradictory." His temporizing on important issues resulted in postponements instead of decisions which could have avoided the awesome consequences of the partition of Germany since the State Department had learned that neither Britain nor Russia considered it to be a compelling issue. For example, State had also recommended the central control of the German economy, industrial preservation and conversion of peaceful production, disarmament, reparations on surplus production only, and no military interference with German participation in international affairs. But State's recommendation that America's postwar aid to the Soviet Union should be used as a "diplomatic bargaining tool" was ignored by the President. Instead, Hanson Baldwin believed that FDR's major mistakes involved his conviction that the

Soviets were moving towards democracy instead of maintaining US resistance to Communist expansion. He also felt that FDR's false dream "of a brave, new world" with Soviet cooperation; his failure to put political interests ahead of military goals; his presidential ego resulting from national popularity, world esteem and a fourth term; and that he made US interests the victim of his wartime propaganda rhetoric. Lastly, Baldwin held that FDR and Churchill made a critical error by not permitting the mutual annihilation of Communism and Nazism without imposing one over the other.

Yet FDR was not solely to blame for the optimistic view of Soviet cooperation during and after the war. The British believed that Hitler's sudden attack against Russia had saved Britain from Nazi occupation and Churchill was so overwhelmed with relief that he was the first to extend all possible aid to help the Soviets resist the Nazi invasion. Later, Anthony Eden advised Roosevelt that Stalin wanted to cooperate with the Western powers but "in any event a wise and expedient thing was to cultivate to the utmost...the friendship and confidence of the Soviet government." The President wholeheartedly agreed. Later, according to Feis, when Eden visited Moscow he suggested that Russia, after having fought in those areas, was entitled to decide questions regarding Rumania, Hungary and Finland. Subsequently, the crucial error was made with the Allied assumption that the forces bearing the burden of the battle would be entitled to handle surrender negotiations in the areas being surrendered. That, of course, gave the Soviets exactly what they wanted and that was why the Poles had refused to enter into an alliance with the Soviets before the war. They knew that once the Russians were permitted to enter Polish territory in the event of a conflict with Germany—they would never leave.

Former Roosevelt aide Edgar Mowrer said that FDR should have made aid to the Soviets available subject to such conditions as no territorial claims, inspection of use of aid, and postwar peace by European confederation. He also insisted that any violations by the Soviets should have cut off all aid, that the use of the threat of separate peace should have been used against the Soviets as they used it against the West, that the US and Britain should have opposed the Soviet demand for the Baltic states and East Poland, and that US-British postwar credits and the reparations agreement should have been used as leverage to advance important Western interests. Mowrer also held that FDR's major blunder involved his

moral and political sacrifices for an idealistic and untried international peace scheme when it should have been obvious the Soviets could not be trusted except when it was to their advantage to do so.

Chester Wilmot says the irony was that as the need for participation by the USSR decreased, Stalin increased the bribe for Soviet participation in the war against Japan. He points out that in reality Stalin conceded nothing and gained much by the agreement and asserts that Roosevelt's response to Stalin's Far East demands was, "That seems like a very reasonable suggestion from our ally. They only want to get back that which has been taken from them." Wilmot says that was wrong. The Kuriles never really belonged to Russia, her so-called rights to Manchuria were "specious," and that obviously recognition of the status-quo in Outer Mongolia would arbitrarily award the USSR control over China. Then when Stalin was informed that no foreign troops would be placed in Korea, yet another opening was created for Communist expansion (which resulted in the Korean War). When Stalin required Roosevelt and Churchill to sign a secret written document that the agreements would be "unquestionably fulfilled," Sherwood said that was the most "assailable point" of Yalta. The secret agreements in Roosevelt's personal safe were not even known by the Department of State until after Roosevelt had died. And Sherwood claims that the President would never have made such agreements with the Soviets had he not been "tired and anxious to avoid further argument..."

Roosevelt was criticized, as Wilson had been, for compromising his own major principles which he had vigorously championed throughout the war. In FDR's case they concerned his positions on postwar commitments, spheres-of-influence, arbitrary territorial changes, and transfer of colonial areas only to international trusteeships. After his deals with Stalin on areas in the Far East, it would have been difficult for him to have defended Poland's sovereignty when he had helped Stalin to breach China's sovereignty. How could he oppose Soviet efforts to create a sphere-of-influence in the Balkans when he had agreed to the Soviets doing so in Mongolia and Manchuria? So when it came to Europe, Stalin's "appetite had been whetted, not satisfied." The time had come for him to be rewarded for making the "concessions" to help the West defeat Japan and for the support "of mankind's greatest hope for world peace"—the United Nations. But the poor people of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Hungary,

Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia would pay the terrible price of being Soviet satellites for almost fifty years!

The executed secret protocol on reparations said that "the Soviet and American delegations agreed" that the Reparations Commission "should take in its initial studies as a basis for discussion the suggestion of the Soviet Government that the total sum should be 20 billion dollars and that 50 per cent of it should go to the USSR." Britain had strenuously objected to the inclusion of any specific amount. Later, the Soviets would claim that "President Roosevelt had agreed at Yalta that Soviet reparations should total at least ten billion dollars." As a consequence, every possible piece of industrial equipment that could be removed from Berlin and the Soviet sector of East Germany was hurriedly shipped back to Russia, and most things of value in the Eastern zone and Berlin, were literally sacked by Russian soldiers.

At Yalta the Soviets also had their way with Poland which established the precedent for all of East Europe and East Germany. Churchill struggled valiantly for a free Poland but Franklin Roosevelt "capitulated" when he agreed that there would be no supervision of the "free elections" which had been previously agreed upon. Thus the tragic fate of Poland, as well as the other states of East Europe, was sealed. Then, having prevailed in Poland, Stalin had conceded that an occupation zone could be given to France out of the Anglo-American areas which cost him absolutely nothing. He flatly refused to even discuss Russia's right to use German prisoners as laborers to reconstruct Russia, and he continued to demand that the US and Britain agree to allot $10 billions to the Soviet Union from Germany in reparations. When Churchill argued strongly against an agreement with a specific sum, Hopkins sent a note to FDR saying: "Mr. President, the Russians have given in so much at this Conference that I do not think we should let them down. Let the British disagree if they want to—and continue their disagreement at Moscow." The proposal was adopted with Roosevelt's support, but Churchill recorded his disagreement.

Roosevelt had not only made agreements that were secret from those to whom they applied, and from the American people as well, but also from his own advisors. Therefore, it is upon Franklin D. Roosevelt that the full responsibility must be placed for the most far-reaching blunders of the worldwide conflict. Although he intended to do what he believed was best for the United States and the cause

of peace and democracy, unfortunately, ego and vanity, over-confidence and expediency caused unrealistic idealism to be cast in good faith against the cunning, deceitful, unprincipled and violently aggressive armed might of a totalitarian state dedicated to the destruction of democracy. The optimistic, idealistic, trusting and manipulative Roosevelt never had a chance against the crafty, ruthless and violent dictator. It was apparent that Roosevelt "the fox" had been no match for Stalin "the bear."

While it was unfortunate that the President did not live to see the formation of his United Nations, at least he was saved the disappointment and the disillusion of his hopes for world peace. While the hope for world peace more than fifty years later appears to be as distant as ever, and the accomplishments of the United Nations have been generally disappointing because it has never been accorded the authority nor the means to fulfill its purpose of establishing and enforcing world peace, it has succeeded with many important accomplishments related directly and indirectly to international peace. Clearly, Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt were right. There can be no other practical and workable way to world peace except by the organization of international cooperation such as the League of Nations and the United Nations to which the nations of the world voluntarily commit their support and accord to it the authority and the necessary means to establish international law and to enforce world peace. While those who have suffered so greatly in wars over past centuries and for fifty years during the worldwide conflict of the superpowers can hardly be expected to agree, the price that the universalists Wilson and Roosevelt paid for their experiments in international cooperation can only be justified when the ideal of a world government and world capable of establishing and maintaining world peace under the rule of law shall at last become a reality.

Contrary to the public perception, Yalta was not the greatest tragedy of World War II. Largely, what happened at Yalta had been pre-determined and decided long before the Crimean conference. The fatal mistakes that were directly responsible for the Allied failure to have avoided the disastrous consequences that followed World War II were directly attributable to Franklin Roosevelt and the American delegation. They were, first, his uncompromising insistence upon the total surrender policy that not only eliminated long-range planning and the advancement of vital Western interests, but postponed important political

decisions which prolonged the conflict and resulted in the political gains that were accorded to the Soviets by the force of their military presence in Central Europe. Second, his outright courtship of the Communist dictator to gain Soviet support for his United Nations concept bestowed a substantial dominance of power upon the Soviet Union when it was evident that they would takeover whatever they could both in Europe and in Asia. And third, his arbitrary, unjustified and unnecessary Far East concessions to the Soviets to gain their participation in the war against an already defeated Japan which exposed Asia to Communist expansion and lead to the awesome circumstances of the Korean and Vietnam wars.

Prior to the conference, Assistant Secretary of Defense James Forrestal recorded in September 1944 that "if any American suggests that we act in accord with our own interests, he is apt to be called a...Fascist or imperialist, while if Uncle Joe (Stalin) suggests that he needs the Baltic provinces, half of Poland" and other claims, "all hands in Washington agree that he is a fine, frank, candid and generally delightful fellow." Author George Crocker said that the new Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, who had been tutored by Hopkins and Alger Hiss, was no match at Yalta for the tough and devious Soviet Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov. And the future Secretary of State Jimmy Byrnes said that Hiss frequently advised both Hopkins and Stettinius at Yalta and that Stettinius himself had proclaimed that "Hiss performed brilliantly throughout...the Yalta Conference."

One of the war's most scandalous tragedies occurred at Yalta when Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, as the great so-called champions of freedom and democracy, shamefully approved the forced displacement and repatriation of millions of human beings which involved great suffering, imprisoned labor, and the death of millions of people. When the dismemberment and occupation of Germany was agreed upon by Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin, the President and the Prime Minister had, in effect, agreed that the Soviets could takeover East Prussia, half of Poland, and the Baltic states as well as East Germany. Many millions of human beings were arbitrarily turned over against their will to Soviet Communism. Ten million Germans were forced from their homes in the greatest mass exodus in history. Churchill called it "a tragedy on a prodigious scale," and others referred to it as "the most enormous official atrocity in all the world's history." But even more tragically, the Big Three not only kept from the public an

infamous secret protocol on reparations which agreed to the Soviet use of German prisoners as forced labor, but Roosevelt and Churchill also agreed that the United States and Britain would deport, against the Geneva Convention and by force if necessary, two million Russians back to the Soviet Union where most were imprisoned and died, and many were executed. When the Yalta papers were released by the State Department ten years later, it was condemned as a "barbaric tragedy" and an infamous "moral blot" by the two "so-called civilized democracies."

The major aims of the newly powerful Soviets at Yalta included: first, the separation of Germany and Austria; second, the transfer of East Prussia to Poland; third, the detachment of the Rhineland, Ruhr and Bavaria to weaken and to reduce Germany into four parts; and fourth, to obtain reparations especially machine tools from Germany. FDR principally, and WC partially, had led Stalin to expect attainment of his aims at war's end, but they believed they had avoided firm commitments. The Atlantic Charter and unconditional surrender had become a "policy of postponement" that served mainly to prevent the Allied formulation of planning for war's end and for postwar peace, and gave the Soviets the opportunity to obtain their political objectives. Both the leaders of the United States and Great Britain were afraid that any other course would have endangered the victory of the East-West coalition against Germany and would threaten the attainment of postwar Western interests.

When Stalin signed the Yalta agreements providing for free and democratic elections in all states liberated from the Germans, and even before Roosevelt and Churchill could report to their governments on the accomplishments of the conference, the Soviets had already begun to use their political commissars to arrest, murder and deport the opponents of Communist governments in the eleven nations which the Red Army had occupied. At Yalta, with his massive forces only fifty miles from Berlin while the Americans were just recovering from the Battle of the Bulge, the Soviet leader knew that Berlin would soon be his and that the Soviet Union would reign supreme throughout middle Europe. Moreover, he knew that the Western capitalists had already shown that they would do nothing which could prevent the sovietization of East Europe.

Undoubtedly, the greatest tragedy at Yalta was that it confirmed the continued extension of the "unconditional surrender" policy to the final bitter end of the war. Subsequently, the massive Red Army would flood across and occupy all of Central

Europe until, by pre-arranged agreement, the armies from the East and the West met in the middle of a devastated Germany. It was a policy that had arisen directly from Franklin Roosevelt's insistence that it was necessary to maintain the postwar unity between America, Britain and the Soviet Union even at the price of sacrificing the rights of numerous small independent states. Critics claimed that FDR's obsession for Woodrow Wilson's ideal of postwar international cooperation to preserve the peace became so possessive that the principles of his Atlantic Charter, United Nations concept, and Declaration for Liberated Europe were quickly cast aside to preserve, what he believed would be, the postwar cooperation between East and West to build a better and more peaceful world. Russell Grenfell contends that the disastrous political consequences of the successful military conduct of the war was caused by democratic politicians using oratorical propaganda instead of developing the expert formulation of political strategy for the conduct of military affairs.

The status of Poland at Yalta had proved to be the Soviet's last battle in their conquest of the West. With his armies already in control of most of Central Europe, and having just gained the gratitude and cooperation of the Americans by agreeing to fight Japan and to support the United Nations, Stalin was confident of the complete success he would gain by the acquiescence of Roosevelt and Churchill. Thereby, he proceeded to consolidate the political assets he felt the Soviets were entitled to by the long and costly struggle of the Red Army. FDR had put aside his suggestion that Poland should retain the Lwow area and the Curzon Line was quickly accepted as Poland's eastern border. Knowing that both of his Western partners would not go beyond the Oder for Poland's western border with Germany, Stalin readily agreed that the question could be decided at the Peace Conference which would give him ample time to set the border between the Oder and Neisse rivers as he wished.

Stalin's signature at Yalta on the Declaration on Liberated Europe had committed the Soviets "to build...a world order under law, dedicated to peace, security and freedom," and "in assisting the peoples liberated from the domination of Nazi Germany...to create democratic institutions of their own choice." However, when the West proposed a new government for Poland to include "all democratic and anti-Fascist forces," the Soviets insisted on merely enlarging their Lublin Committee which would enable the Communists to retain Polish control. After four day's arguments, the Soviets agreed that free

elections would be held within a month, but they unalterably opposed supervision by the West which, in reality, nullified the agreement. At the final Yalta session, FDR agreed to concede on supervision, and when a compromise for the "Provisional Government" to include democratic leaders from Poland and from abroad was adopted, the Anglo-American leaders naively considered it to be "an honorable and equitable solution." In 1964 when this author served as Director of Exile Political Affairs for Free Europe Committee in New York, he was told by Stanislas Mikolajczyk, the war-time Prime Minister of Poland, that President Roosevelt and the Americans had been "completely duped" by the Soviets at the end of World War II.

Unsurprisingly as should have been expected, the free elections that were promised by the Soviets never took place. By the end of 1945, Stalin's Communists had taken control of all the nations of East Europe except Czechoslovakia which they took over in 1948. As Churchill would say less than a year after Yalta, "from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an Iron Curtain has descended across the Continent." But another example of the true character of Soviet Communism had been revealed. In 1943 the bodies of 8,000 Polish officers were found by the Germans in the Katyn Forest in Russia where they had been murdered by Stalin after he and Hitler had split Poland between them. Furthermore, in August 1944, after intentionally inciting a Polish uprising against the Nazis in Warsaw, the Soviets intentionally waited outside the city refusing their aid until after 200,000 Poles had been massacred by the Germans. Incredibly, Franklin Roosevelt and his supporters continued to believe that they could do business with the Soviets in good faith to the extent that the vital interests of the United States were subjugated to the appeasement of aggressive Soviet Communism.

Other historians contend that at Yalta the United States was in no position to gain additional concessions from the Soviets alleging that it was much too late to change policies which never should have been adopted. If Churchill's Balkan operations proposal had been accepted by the Americans, they say, the Western Allies might have been able to cut-off the Soviets before they overran Central Europe. But then the assault on Normandy would have been replaced or badly weakened; impenetrable barriers in the Alps may have frustrated operations; the advances would have had to be completed by October 1944 to forestall Soviet gains; long and vulnerable supply lines, communications and logistics would have been

necessary; and potential disastrous collisions with Soviet troops were possible. After all, as historian Rudolph Winnacker says, "The principles of singleness of objective and concentration of force are seldom violated with impunity in war or in diplomacy...Perhaps we should have changed our policy after...the first effective Soviet counteroffensives in early 1943. By coming to terms with the Germans, if not the Nazis, we could conceivably have employed their manpower and industrial resources in containing the Soviet Union," but at the cost of alienating essential friends and much of our moral fortitude. Finally, Winnacker concludes, it is a statesman's job "to analyze a situation correctly and at no time make any agreements which, if his estimate was mistaken, would jeopardize the security of his country." It is clear that Roosevelt and Hopkins understood the international situation well and either intentionally ignored realities or allowed themselves to become so determined to seize what they believed would be the opportunity to bring peace to the world that the best interests of the United States, as well as the free world, were willingly exposed to Communist aggression and occupation.

Roosevelt associate Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. writes that Roosevelt, Cordell Hull, Sumner Welles, Adolph Berle, Averill Harriman, Charles Bohlen and Henry Stimson were all supporters of universalism that was enshrined in the Atlantic Charter of 1941, the Declaration of the United Nations in 1942, and in the Moscow Declaration of 1943. But, he said, they much preferred it abroad and not too close to home. Schlesinger also says the universalists did not like the spheres-of-influence solution for peace because it had never worked in the past and inevitably ended up in war. They believed it would pre-empt the organization of international cooperation for peace, the isolationists would use it to keep the United States out of European and Asian affairs, that it would be inconsistent with the purposes for which the war was fought and, lastly, that political problems with large ethnic groups at home would be created.

Attempts have also been made to justify the Soviet occupation of East Europe as a necessity to create security barriers for Russia. However, it was clearly evident that the militant goal of Communism has always been "to aggressively replace capitalism with communism." Furthermore, the Western Allies should not have overlooked the fact that the Soviet people themselves were not fighting for Communism—they fought and defeated the Germans to preserve their own lives and Mother Russia. Churchill had rightly offered aid to the Soviets after the Nazi

attack on Russia when he said he would do business with the Devil, if necessary, to defeat Nazi Germany. That did not mean, of course, that he had forgotten or forgiven the Soviets for what they had done and stood for. But both Roosevelt and Churchill erred fatally by refusing to face up to realities and by using the expediency of postponing important political issues until they were forced to recognize that Soviet aggression and intransigence "had made a mockery of the worldwide struggle for peace and freedom."

Gaddis Smith concludes that at the end of World War II, "the legacy of victory was not peace and prosperity for all mankind—as the Atlantic Charter had promised—but continued suffering, hatred, and the threat of war. The United States directly and by supporting its allies had encompassed the unconditional defeat of the Axis enemy, but now found itself in a world where there was less security than in 1942." He adds that Roosevelt and his advisors were right to believe that peace and security could not be gained without "firm Soviet-Western cooperation," but that their "tactics of conciliation and well-meaning appeasement" of the Soviets won only "a few paper agreements" which by war's end were in "tatters." And finally on March 24, 1945 just before he died, FDR admitted to what should have been obvious from the beginning, that "Averell (Harriman) is right: we can't do business with Stalin. He has broken every one of the promises he made at Yalta."

Just as great blunders caused World War I to become World War II, so World War II became the Cold War which would last for practically half a century. For the second time the American-inspired good intentions had resulted in the continuation of disaster for most of mankind. Twice a world war had produced an international organization which proved to be impotent for the elimination of war and for preserving the peace. What must be concluded by this? Was there no effective way to establish and maintain world peace? What would be necessary to insure that there would be no more wars? Is it too much of an ideal to ever become a reality? Only one thing is known: that unless the answers to these questions are found soon, nuclear war and mass destruction will certainly destroy much, if not most, of humanity on this earth. To put it in the most direct terms possible, law and order must be established and enforced on an international basis as it is at national and local levels. There is no other effective way to stop wars and to enforce and maintain world peace. That is the final and indisputable lesson of both Yalta and World War II!

Chapter 14

The Battle of the Atlantic

The struggle for the control of the Atlantic Ocean was the longest, and in many ways,, the most difficult battle of World War II. It was a furious and deadly struggle that lasted for six years and it was the only battle that lasted from the beginning to the end of the war. Actually it began with the German attack on Poland on September 1, 1939, as Hitler prepared for the probability of war with the Western Powers, and it did not end until the surrender of Germany on May 8, 1945. Since the German navy (Kriegsmarine) was no match for the powerful Royal Navy, the Germans knew they could win the battle of the seas against the world's most powerful navy only by using the naval weapon they had successfully employed in World War I—the Unterseeboote (U-boats). Thus, particularly after the Luftwaffe failed to win the Battle of Britain, the Germans were determined to cut Britain off from the outside world and to starve it into submission. And they almost succeeded!

Germany's possession of one of the most effective weapons of the war resulted from their continued development of the submarine without interruption from World War I to World War II in spite of the restrictions of the Versailles treaty. However, as a result of one of the most vital mistakes by Germany in World War II, the production of submarines had not been increased prior to the invasion of Poland in 1939. Although much progress had been made in increasing the efficiency of the U-boat, only fifty-seven undersea craft had been built when the war began and only thirty-six were capable of being operated in the Atlantic. In fact, with a navy that consisted of only two old battleships, two battle-cruisers, three pocket battleships, eight cruisers, twenty-two destroyers and no plans for an extensive submarine campaign, no one expected Germany to be a formidable foe at sea.

The Versailles Treaty had restricted Germany's naval strength to a few old obsolescent ships which included no submarines and only replacements were allowed. Manpower was limited to 15,000 men with not more than 1,500 officers. However in 1935, the London Naval Agreement provided that Germany could build its naval strength up to thirty-five percent of the ships and forty-five percent of the submarines in the British navy. But during the postwar Weimar Republic, Germany ignored the restrictions and built three pocket-battleships named the *Deutschland*, *Admiral Scheer* and *Admiral Graf Spee* which were no larger than cruisers but were as powerful as battleships and much faster. By 1936 the Germans had thirty-five submarines and two years later the navy made plans for six 50,000 ton battleships, twelve 20,000 ton cruisers, four 20,000 ton aircraft carriers, a large number of light cruisers and 233 U-boats.

Adolf Hitler committed one of his greatest blunders by moving politically before he was militarily prepared as he precipitated the beginning of World War II when the German navy was in no position to successfully challenge Britain as the world's traditionally greatest seapower. Furthermore, he completely failed to recognize that Germany possessed one weapon with which he not only could have won his battle with Britain, but it also could have changed the final outcome of World War II. It was a weapon, as James P. Duffy called it, which "he never truly understood, and misused throughout the war. This was the U-boat." Instead, the Nazi dictator relied on a futile attempt to contest Britain with new and costly surface ships instead of expanding Germany's submarine fleet which alone had almost strangled Great Britain in the First World War. While plans were made for a greatly expanded navy, the Fuehrer had initially ordered Germany's armed forces to be ready for war in 1944 at the earliest. Consequently, the German navy was not prepared when war came and many German military leaders believed that if Hitler had only waited longer before commencing the war, Germany could have been victorious.

Basically, the Kriegsmarine was unprepared because its fleet had been largely eliminated by the Allies at the end of World War I and it was restricted from rebuilding beyond the limits of the Versailles Treaty. Other limitations were caused by inadequate shipyard capacities, priorities for the Wehrmacht and Luftwaffe, and competition and disagreements among the services. The Fuehrer finally agreed to build-up the Untersee force, but he mistakenly continued

priority to his land and air forces, when in reality the U-boats provided the most practical opportunity for winning the war with Britain. Also, Allied aid to Soviet Russia would have been reduced, if not cut off, and Hitler would have been able to concentrate his military strength for the successful conquest of the Soviet Union. Then too, the United States would have been left standing practically alone between the Nazis and world domination. But, as we now know, Adolf Hitler initially thought he could force Britain into peaceful relations, at least, until his ambitions elsewhere had been satisfied. Thus, he concluded, it was unnecessary for Germany to become a major seapower until after he had attained the domination of Europe.

In spite of their near defeat by the U-boats in 1917, the British made a critical mistake before World War II in assuming that the submarine threat would be minimal in a future war because their ASDIC detection system would be so successful that submerged craft would play no important role in warfare. Therefore, they believed that the submarine was practically obsolete and would not seriously threaten the continued domination of the seas by the Royal Navy. The reality was, however, that in the First War the German navy had realized it was no match for the British navy and determined that doing battle under the seas would give them their only chance of isolating the British and to win the war. Therefore, as early as 1932 they ignored the Versailles restrictions and began to build a large fleet of U-boats convinced once again that it would be the best way to win another war with Britain.

With the British fleet standing at 2,000,000 tons it was nine times larger than the German fleet. So it should have been obvious to the British, as it was to the Germans, that the Battle of the Atlantic would be a repeat of the blockade and counter-blockade of World War I. As in 1914, as soon as hostilities began, Britain attempted to blockade Germany with its surface ships and Germany attempted to blockade Britain with its submarines. The British Admiralty had at once placed all merchant shipping under its jurisdiction and immediately both belligerents listed contraband goods that would be subject to seizure. The British navy also began to plant mines from Scotland to Norway and across the English Channel, and the Germans attempted to cover the entrance to British harbors with magnetic mines. Thus it became obvious to the Germans that the battle of the blockades could only be won by unrestricted U-boat warfare as in the previous war.

As an island kingdom involved in warfare, Britain's survival would depend upon the import of vast quantities of food, raw materials and munitions. But after having practically forgotten they had almost lost the battle against the U-boats in World War I, the British navy was badly unprepared to fight a modern war at sea. In fact as late as March 1939, Winston Churchill was shocked to find that it was proposed that the government should scrap five battleships. Fortunately they were saved, but they had seriously erred by their dependence upon their anti-submarine detection (ASDIC) system. The device had been improperly tested under combat conditions when its reliability was affected by water disturbances resulting from ship wakes and depth charges which enemy U-boats could use to their advantage. Furthermore, the detection was effective generally against submerged vehicles and it was not anticipated that the Germans would quickly adapt to nighttime operations while surfaced, so that the effectiveness of the major British submarine defensive device was largely nullified.

Perhaps the Admiralty's greatest mistake of the war was that even after Britain had almost been starved into submission in World War I, it not only failed to realize that the nation again faced a critical threat from the German U-boats, but that its own fleet was largely composed of older vessels which was particularly short in cruisers and anti-submarine weapons. Consequently, Britain was ill-prepared in both experience and training for defending their shipping from submarine attacks. Once the conflict got underway another crucial mistake, that was unjustifiable under any circumstance after the experience of the previous war, involved the failure to give the highest priority to the protection of convoys from attack by submarines. Instead, at a time when the availability of armed craft was critically limited, the fatal experience of 1914 was repeated when "hunting groups" were sent out on "search and destroy" missions which proved to have been a misapplication of assets that greatly endangered the security of the British Isles.

For the year of 1939 Great Britain required fifty-five million tons of imported goods to sustain her existence. Her merchant fleet consisted of about 3,000 ocean-going ships and 1,000 coastal ships totaling about twenty-one million gross-register tons. At any given moment, some 2,500 of its vessels were at sea worldwide, but as the war began the Admiralty made the serious error of being most concerned about Hitler's surface ships rather than his U-boats. They knew that the German's three new purpose-built pocket-battleships were vastly

superior to any of their ships, with the exception of the three older and formidable battlecruisers *Hood*, *Repulse* and *Renown*, and that the new fast and powerful enemy ships presented a serious threat to the British Navy that could not be ignored.

On September 3, 1939 the naval resources of the major powers in the war in Europe were as follows (existing/under-construction):

	Great Britain	United States	France	Germany	Italy
Battleships	12/7	15/8	8/3	/4	4/4
Pocket Battleships	—	—	—	3	—
Battle Cruisers	3	—	—	—	—
Aircraft Carriers	7/6	5/2	1/1	/2	—
Cruisers	55/19	36/7	50/3	8/6	22
Destroyers	184/32	181/42	28/24	22/16	59/8
Sloops	38/4	—	8	—	1
Corvettes	8/3	—	—	8	—
Submarines	58/24	9/15	78/14	57/40	105/14
Torpedo Boats	27/20	1/19	15/6	s17	69
Minesweepers	42	26/3	26/7	32/18	—
Minelayers	7/4	10/1	4	—	16
Gunboats	20	13	10	—	—
Trawlers	72/20	—	—	—	—
Submarine Tenders	—	6/2	—	—	—
Submarine Chasers	—	14/16	21	—	—
Aircraft Tenders	—	13/6	—	—	—
Destroyer Tenders	—	8/4	—	—	—
Seaplane Tender	2	—	—	—	1

The most powerful formation in the Royal Navy was the Home Fleet which had its base at Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands with the responsibility for protecting the home waters, and to cover the Mediterranean and the Pacific areas as well. It included five battleships, two battlecruisers, one aircraft carrier, twelve cruisers, seventeen destroyers and seven minesweepers. A second aircraft carrier was located in the Firth of Forth, ten submarines were based at Dundee, and six at

Blyth. Ashore there were six naval home commands at Portsmouth for the south of England, Dover for the Channel, Nore for the Thames Estuary and eastern England, Rosyth for East and West Scotland, Orkneys and Shetland for North of Scotland, and the Western Approaches as the major convoy center with thirty-two destroyers covering southwest England and the Irish Sea. Various naval forces were distributed among these commands and were located at a number of ports and harbors. Lastly, the Special Channel Force was based at Portland with two battleships, two aircraft carriers, three cruisers and nine destroyers whose major task was to guard against the expected cross-channel invasion of Great Britain.

Other British commands were located at Alexandria, Egypt with three battleships, an aircraft carrier and seven cruisers for the Mediterranean area; Gibraltar served the North Atlantic; Freetown, Africa with four cruisers covered the South Atlantic and South America; and the America and West Indies base consisted of four cruisers. In addition, Britain had one battleship in drydock, five new ones under construction, and six aircraft carriers on order. Above all, the Royal Navy had the difficult and demanding responsibility of keeping open the worldwide lifelines of Great Britain and the British Empire, to maintain the blockade of Germany and Italy, to protect troop movements and maintain supplies to overseas forces, to operate and control all merchant shipping, and most importantly, to protect the British Isles from invasion by Germany.

The Fleet Air Arm consisted of 430 aircraft, most of which were obsolete, with six carriers and four naval air stations. The RAF Coastal Command, although its seventeen squadrons were short of manpower, undertook the major responsibilities of reconnaissance, patrolling and protection of convoys for which it was poorly prepared and equipped. The range and striking power of its aircraft was so limited that the Bomber Command had to be called upon for attacks on major naval targets. Unfortunately, depth-charges had not been adapted for use by aircraft and fighters and would not be available to protect shipping until 1940. Consequently, the errors of poor planning and the failure to anticipate the danger to surface ships posed by enemy U-boats and aircraft, were largely responsible for heavy losses of shipping close to the coasts of Britain, which could have been avoided.

The German navy's strategy for the war included three major phases: first, to extend the war at sea by every means possible including, when necessary, the vio-

lation of international law with "unrestricted submarine warfare" as in World War I; second, to increase the production of U-boats at 20-30 per month with a higher priority than any other rearmament program; and third, to secretly build U-boats in the Soviet Union and in Italy to be based in Norwegian waters for operations against Britain. But Hitler erred by being too busy elsewhere and little was done to change the existing naval program. Eventually, he approved the elimination of special restrictions regarding attacks on enemy shipping within the limitations of existing resources. However, in late 1940 when he realized the Battle of Britain had been lost, Hitler authorized the sinking of enemy ships without warning and the torpedoing of enemy passenger ships without notice. Then, in early 1941, approval was given for sinking neutral ships without warning "so long as it is possible to put the blame on mines." Thus, in effect, the unrestricted submarine warfare of the Germans in World War I was reinstituted in World War II.

As soon as the attack on Poland occurred in September 1939, German commander of submarines Captain Karl Doenitz placed eighteen of his U-boats at prearranged locations in the Atlantic from Scotland to Gibraltar with thirty stationed in the North Sea and the Baltic, and the remaining nine were being refitted or used for training. And, before the war started, two of Germany's eight major vessels, the *Deutschland* and the *Admiral Graf Spee*, were at sea in the Atlantic. All German vessels were immediately directed to observe Prize Law against merchant ships which, under the Hague convention, required all ships, including submarines, to be on the surface during all stop and search operations at sea. Then, if the ships were found to belong to the enemy or to be carrying contraband goods, they could be sunk only after giving passengers and crews the opportunity to use lifeboats to attempt to reach safety. Only ships being used for military purposes including troopships, armed merchantmen, vessels with naval or air escorts, or ships attempting to resist or to endanger submarines, could be sunk without warning.

Once World War II began, the Royal Navy provided Britain with the only means it had to fight the enemy with a superior weapon. The first obvious action involved the imposition of a blockade of Germany. Then their principal worry concerned Germany's surface ships, and particularly her three pocket-battleships. Specially designed as raiders with heavy firepower and great speed with ranges up

to 21,500 miles, they were a formidable danger to Allied ships. And they posed a constant threat of forays into the Atlantic which forced the British navy to tie-down large elements of the fleet strong enough to prevent enemy raids wherever they were most likely to occur. But the German navy was far from being prepared to do battle with the world's most formidable fleet and the Nazi Fuehrer had been the cause of its weakened state. When Hitler succeeded in gaining his early aggressions, largely through the appeasement of Britain and France, he also expected that they would back down again when they suddenly had to face up to the reality of becoming involved in another war because of Poland. After all, with the Soviet Union ready to share the spoils in Poland, there was practically nothing they could do to prevent Poland's defeat and the war would be over before they could even attempt to help the Poles. Consequently, the Fuehrer did not expect war with the West before 1944 at the earliest, so there had been no need for Germany to prepare to fight the powerful British navy in 1939.

The first casualty of the Battle of the Atlantic occurred only three days after the war began when a German submarine 250 miles northwest of Ireland sank the British *S.S. Athenia* with 1,103 passengers and a crew of 350 without warning and 118 persons, including 28 Americans, were lost. The attack was ordered by a young aggressive U-Boat commander in spite of Hitler's direction that passenger ships should not be attacked even when escorted by armed craft. The world was outraged and the British and the Americans pointed out that Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare had brought the United States into war against Germany in World War I. Germany charged that Winston Churchill had ordered the sinking to arouse American sympathy. Hitler, of course, did not want the Americans in the war any more than the Kaiser had in 1915, but the sinking of the *Athenia* had other far-reaching consequences. The fact was that, unknown to the German U-boat that sank her, the *Athenia* was actually carrying 173 tons of ammunition in addition to its 1,103 passengers. In spite of the worldwide outrage over the sinking of an "innocent passenger ship" with great loss of life, the British Admiralty incorrectly assumed that the *Athenia's* loss meant that Germany had resumed its unrestricted submarine warfare of World War I. But at least, it caused the British to invoke their convoy system much sooner than otherwise would have been the case.

When Germany needed to test the wartime effectiveness of its capital ships, two of its heavy warships were sent out into the Atlantic for raids on enemy shipping. The pocket battleship *Admiral Scheer* sank sixteen unescorted merchant ships and returned to port at Kiel, but when the heavy cruiser *Hipper* attacked an escorted convoy she was damaged and was forced to put into Brest for repairs. In February 1940 she came out again and sank seven ships out of a convoy of nineteen vessels. However, after obtaining little success from single ship forays, the battlecruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* were sent out in support of each other. But having no aircraft available, and after refusing to attack convoys that were escorted by Britain's older World War I vintage battleships, they withdrew back into Brest after having sunk twenty-one merchant ships.

Although use of the convoy system had prevailed in the First War and would eventually win the Battle of the Atlantic, there was opposition to its employment in the Second War. Powerful opponents claimed that convoys took too much time and thereby reduced the total volume of greatly needed cargo being transported to the British Isles. Others, including Winston Churchill at the Admiralty, considered the tactic to be too psychologically defensive in nature. They ignored the fact that convoys not only protected ships, but also attracted U-Boats which could then be more easily destroyed when, otherwise, it was extremely difficult to find them at sea. Also, unfortunately, considerable resources and time was wasted by the attempt to use so-called "hunting groups" which searched for the enemy practically uselessly over large areas instead of devoting every available ship as convoy escorts. As a consequence, one of the most important struggles of the war was almost lost. In any case, if the convoy system had not been used at the time and in the way it was employed, the German navy could have won the war on the Atlantic.

To indicate the scope of the convoy task, on any given day the number of British merchant ships at sea averaged 2,500 all of which were vulnerable to attack by enemy submarines, aircraft and surface ships. During the previous war, heavy losses had proved that ships in convoys escorted by armed vessels had the best chance of crossing the seas safely. Thus as the Second World War began, when possible convoys up to sixty ships were escorted by armed vessels or aircraft to the extent that limited resources permitted. Since convoy vessels were available for only part of the vast shipping needs, many ships were required to sail without

escort and ships capable of speeds of nine or ten knots or greater were encouraged to sail alone. As expected, enemy submarines preyed on ships not in convoy, and when 102 ships had been sunk in the last four months of 1939 by thirty-eight U-boats, only four ships had been in convoys. At first the shortage of escort vessels permitted protection for a distance of only 100 miles west of Ireland from where they were forced to sail alone. The erroneous assumption was made that they would then be beyond the range of U-boats as in the First War. So the new U-boats with greatly increased ranges merely waited until the convoys dispersed then picked the lone ships off one by one. The only exceptions involved the huge 80,000 ton super-liners Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth which served mainly as troop carriers to England. Traveling at a speed of twenty-eight knots, no escort craft could keep up with them much less a German U-boat, so they sailed alone. Fortunately, none of their extremely heavy loads of American troops were lost since no enemy vessel of any kind was ever able to intercept them.

In the first week of war twelve British merchant ships were sunk and within the first two months sixty-seven Allied and neutral ships were destroyed while twenty U-boats were sunk. Then the British quickly organized the convoy system which had saved them from defeat in World War I. Since most of their imports came from the United States and Canada, the convoys were set upon a predetermined path and were protected by aircraft near shore and by escorts of destroyers and heavier ships in the open sea as far as the limited availability of escort craft would permit. During convoy fast destroyers constantly circled the ships and were prepared to quickly attack detected submarines with depth charges. Such tactics proved to become so effective against individual U-boats operating alone that the Germans were forced to adopt their infamous "wolf-pack" tactics.

During the early phases of the conflict the dual responsibility to destroy the enemy's capability of attack and to protect the maintenance of Britain's lifelines greatly exceeded the resources of the merchant marine and, particularly, for escort vessels. For example, during the month of February 1940, with all merchant ships under a single command, every ship of the Home Fleet averaged twenty-three out of twenty-nine days each month at sea. It was hailed as a remarkable accomplishment of duty and performance, but it was far from enough to insure the safety of the British Isles. Fortunately, the collapse of the Western powers in France had occurred so quickly and unexpectedly that the

German navy was caught totally unprepared to pursue its defeated and demoralized enemy. It had become apparent that Hitler's failure to quickly strike while Britain was weakest had provided the Royal Navy, as well as the Royal Air Force, vital time to take those initial steps which would eventually win the Battle of Britain and the Battle of the Atlantic.

Before the war at sea began, the German navy had assumed that their surface ships, many of them new with advanced capabilities and power, would prove to be decisive against Britain's older and outmoded navy. When the conflict began the new pocket-battleships *Deutschland* and *Admiral Graf Spee* were at sea in the mid-Atlantic, and while they had been ordered not to attack before September 26, they had caused little damage. But by December 15, after having sunk over 50,000 tons of shipping, the *Graf Spee* was engaged off the coast of Brazil by the British South Atlantic squadron comprised of the cruisers *Exeter* and *Cumberland*, light cruiser *Ajax*, and New Zealand cruiser *Achilles*. After being struck by twenty shells in a running fight, the *Spee* was badly damaged and sought refuge in the neutral waters of the River Plarte between Argentina and Uruguay. Her captain had badly erred, however, for with his weapons still intact he should have continued the fight. Instead, he scuttled the ship and committed suicide. Meanwhile, in November the new battlecruisers *Gniesenau* and *Scharnhorst* had slipped out into the Atlantic but, after sinking only one merchant ship, they quickly rushed back to port. By that time, Allied ships were sailing in convoys and even with limited escort protection, losses were being reduced.

Two weeks after the beginning of the war, Britain's aircraft carrier *Courageous* was sunk by a U-boat and several days later the carrier *Ark Royal* had just missed being sent under by a submarine which was quickly sunk by destroyers. During the first month of the war 154,000 tons of shipping involving forty-one Allied and neutral ships were sunk and 114 ships totaling over 420,000 tons were lost by the end of 1939. Incredibly, October 1939 was one of the greatest embarrassments in the history of the Royal Navy. German sub U.47 somehow managed to get through the British fleet anchorage at Scapa Flow and sank the battleship *Royal Oak*. In spite of that disaster, total losses of shipping to submarines had been cut by half during the final two months of the year and more ships were lost by mines than by submarines.

Following the Germans sudden and successful invasion of Norway in April 1940, a British amphibious force was dispatched in great haste and confusion to recapture Narvik and Trondheim to prevent German air attacks on Britain from Norway, as well as to help the Norwegians regain their freedom. But again it was too little and too late. The weak and poorly planned operation failed to consider the Luftwaffe control of the air and, after three weeks of sacrificial struggle, another humiliating Allied retreat ensued. Disastrously, Britain's northern sea-flank lay exposed to the enemy and the Royal Navy had become vulnerable to the enemy's powerful air force. Even worse, it was now apparent that warships could no longer operate safely in the face of superior air power and that future successful naval operations would require protective air cover. While the Nazi invasion of Norway was highly successful, the German navy suffered extensive losses including one heavy cruiser, two light cruisers, ten destroyers and eight submarines.

The defeat of France in the spring of 1940 gave Germany an immense advantage as French ports and airfields were taken over for use by her ships, submarines, and aircraft. The major submarine base was established at Lorient which reduced by half the at-sea-time formerly required for U-boats to go to and from Kiel, Germany for resupply and refitting. Equally important, the range of the submarines was greatly increased which doubled the effectiveness of Germany's submarine fleet. Suddenly, all shipping in or near the British Isles from the southwest was subjected to attacks by submarines, surface ships, and aircraft. The only relatively safe route remaining to Britain ran by the north of Ireland which could still be reached by Germany's new long-range bombers flying out of Norway and France. In the months of October and November 1940 the U-boats sank eighty-one ships totaling 416,000 tons. The threat to Britain increased so greatly that ships standing guard against a channel invasion had to be transferred to cover the Northwestern Approaches. Fifty-eight ships with 284,000 tons were sunk in June 1941 and the losses during the following months averaged 250,000 tons. On the more dangerous eastern and channel routes, however, more damage was caused by mines dropped by German aircraft than by U-boats and, after the German occupation of Norway, the losses by mines increased substantially.

After Norway and with Italy's entry into the war, the pressure and threat to the British navy was greatly increased and the very nature of the battle was rapidly

changing. The areas covered by the U-boats had widely increased and the Germans had surpassed the British in breaking each other's codes. British patrol aircraft were few in number and had only ineffective bombs to use against submarines. By mid-1940 the extent of the success by the Kriegsmarine had been only temporarily limited by the number of U-boats available. Allied and neutral ships were being sunk faster than they could be built and adequate supplies for Britain were being cut off along with a heavy loss of life. At the same time, since submarines were faster on the surface, they usually outran convoy escorts after their nighttime attacks. Then miraculously, just in time to avoid the loss of the Battle of the Atlantic, new small radar sets became available to the British which were installed on escort ships and aircraft to identify and combat surfaced U-boats. No longer could the U-boats remain undetected on the surface to evade pursuit after their attacks. It was one of the most important turning points in the Atlantic battle which, unquestionably, saved Britain from being starved into surrender.

By mid-1940 the Germans had increased their submarine strength by fifty percent with twenty-seven U-boats sunk and fifty-one in service, but by early 1941 only twenty-one undersea vessels were active. Still the use of French ports had enabled them to use smaller coastal-type submarines to cover the beginning and end of ocean routes. Moreover, Italian submarines had begun to operate in the Atlantic and by November 1940, although there were twenty-six I-boats in operation in the Atlantic area, they achieved little or no success.

The Royal Navy had the dual task of protecting the merchant fleet and to defend the British Isles from invasion by the enemy. Following the dramatic evacuation of the BEF at Dunkirk, it was generally assumed that Hitler would quickly attack Britain by crossing the channel and that, in the absence of an effective armed resistance, he would easily succeed. As Churchill put it, "Never has a great nation been so naked before her foes." With its army shattered and unequipped, Britain could only rely on its navy and air force to maintain its freedom, and the navy was given the basic responsibility to defend the nation against what was expected to be a vicious and overpowering assault by the Germans. When Hitler finally realized that Britain would not voluntarily yield in the face of his powerful threat, he was determined to wipe-out Britain as a base from which the war could be continued against Germany in order that he might concentrate all his resources on the conquest of the Soviet Union.

Harwich, Sheerness, and Dover and were backed up with substantial cruiser support. More than 400 trawlers and drifters of the Auxiliary Patrol and 700 other patrol types worked as a screening force of mobile vedettes covering the coasts from the far north-east of Scotland south to the Solway Firth. But the necessity to divert much of their lighter warships for anti-invasion protection resulted in high shipping losses for mid-1940 which grew from 107,000 tons in March to 448,000 tons in September.

While Britain's fear was considerably relieved by her victory in the skies, the German navy's continuing doubts about its ability to stage a successful amphibious operation was a major factor in Hitler's decision to defer Operation SEA LION until May 1941. Obviously, the power of Britain's strong navy had caused the Kriegsmarine's Admiral Erich Raeder to oppose an invasion in 1940. But it was the blundering failure of Herman Goering's Luftwaffe to defeat the courageous RAF which caused Hitler to call off the attempted assault. Overshadowed by the dramatic successes of the Wehrmacht and the Luftwaffe, and permanently relegated to a secondary role in the victories of the Third Reich, the German navy was said to have had little confidence in the power of the Fuehrer's will to overcome the world's greatest navy.

Since much of Germany's assets had been invested in their new capital ships, Raeder sought to make use of them against Allied and neutral merchant ships in the fall of 1940. The *Admiral Scheer* was sent out undetected into the North Atlantic and sank five ships in a convoy which had only one escort. Then the mere threat of the raiders held up all convoys while the *Scheer* sailed to the south and sank sixteen more ships of 99,000 tons before returning to Kiel. At the end of November the *Admiral Hipper* entered the Atlantic, but when she attacked a convoy she was driven off by its escorting cruisers. On another sortie in February 1941, the *Hipper* sank six ships in an unescorted convoy off the African coast and returned safely to Kiel for refitting in March. Obviously, the limited successes of her big ships was a great disappointment to Germany.

Back in October 1940, the convoy escort groups had been organized and the special training of eight groups was begun at locations in England and Scotland. Each group was composed of up to eight ships including two destroyers and they were trained to employ every device and technique available to defend the convoys. It was the essential innovation with the later addition of long-range-

aircraft, that enabled the Allies to keep the sea lanes open and allowed Britain to receive the massive quantities of food, fuel, ammunition, tanks, aircraft, vehicles and supplies which enabled the British people to survive. It also served to establish England as the all-important staging area for mounting the Allied offensives which would end the domination of the European continent by the Nazi Germans and the Fascist Italians.

It soon became evident, however, that limited Allied escort resources could not long hold-off the vicious assaults of the enemy submarines. With the U-boats quickly shuttling back and forth from nearby French ports, the unavailability of armed craft to escort convoys more than about 200 miles from shore at each end of the Atlantic, continued to force ships to proceed across the mid-Atlantic unescorted where the U-boats lay in wait for them. Although the escort limit was later extended to 400 miles, generally only one or two armed merchant cruisers were available for each convoy. Nova Scotia served as the major western terminal for most convoys crossing the Atlantic and initially cargoes consisted mainly of food, oil and munitions. For the first 300 or 400 miles they were escorted by Canadian vessels, when available, then ocean escorts took over until the better protected Western Approaches were reached. The use of small armed corvettes began in 1940, and the exchange of fifty surplus American destroyers for new bases for US naval operations considerably expanded the protection for convoys between Britain and North America..

During 1940 Doenitz had begun to employ night attacks on convoys when the U-boats found they could surface with less danger of detection. 200 British and neutral ships were sunk in June when the British made the erroneous decision that the convoys were too slow and that more ships would survive by sailing independently. Thus losses continued to climb sharply. By March 1941, out of a total of 650 ships sunk, 520 had sailed independently. Finally, when the gap was eliminated in April the convoy limit was extended to mid-Atlantic which removed the necessity for any ships to sail alone across the area not previously covered by escorts.

Normally the U-boats ran on the surface propelled by their diesel engines and they dove for underwater operations powered by batteries only when in attack or when concerned about detection. The batteries, however, could only be recharged by the diesel engines on the surface usually at night when the U-boats

were in their greatest danger of detection and attack by convoy escorts or aircraft. Without question, the major German type VII U-boat was one of the most remarkable and effective weapons of the war. It displaced 626 tons with a cruising range of 6,800 miles carrying eleven torpedoes at ten knots with a submerged range of ninety miles at four knots. 705 of them were built and it was the major U-boat weapon of the Atlantic conflict. By the end of 1940, although only a limited number of U-boats were in the open seas, their highly successful operations had destroyed 443 ships with a total of 2.5 million tons. In early 1941, after only two months of operations from the French bases in the Bay of Biscay, 142 ships were sunk totaling 815,000 tons.

Unfortunately, by that time the RAF Bomber Command had begun its bombing offensive against Germany so only a few longer range aircraft were being made available to Coastal Command. Furthermore, the Fleet Air Arm was having problems in getting aircraft for the thirty-one new escort carriers it had ordered. Other difficulties, such as high priorities for amphibious landing craft instead of new frigates for convoys, US allocations of new ships for the Pacific, and the need to replace U-boat losses, resulted in the availability of fewer escort crafts and higher shipping losses both in the Atlantic and in the approaches to the British Isles.

While U-boat attacks had actually decreased during the winter of 1940-41, the innovation of "wolf-pack" tactics in which several U-boats teamed up against enemy convoys subsequently increased Allied losses. Once a convoy was located, the Kriegsmarine shore command notified the nearest submarine group to detach a U-boat to locate and follow the convoy, thereby leading the rest of the pact to it's prey by its "homing" wireless. Then torpedoes were launched at night from the surface where detection was most difficult and when the U-boats could move more quickly than the escorts. The new tactic caught the British completely unprepared since they had been preoccupied with developing protection against submerged attacks. Their reliance had been placed on their ASDIC (later known as SONAR) system which operated as an underwater directional transmitter that bounced sound back off a submarine as an echo, but which was of no advantage against surfaced U-boats.

Soon the successful prowling of the wolf-packs gave the German crews what they called their "happy times." From July to October 144 unescorted ships and

seventy-three escorted ships were lost while only six U-boats were sunk of which only two were lost while attacking convoys. It was the most victorious period of the war for the Germans at sea and in Europe as well. For the British people it was the most hopeless and painful time of World War II. They were not only losing the struggle at sea but they had just lost the battle of France, gone through the disastrous retreat at Dunkirk, and were being subjected to the terrors of the "Blitz," together with the constant fear of invasion and conquest by the brutal Nazis.

As the convoys with little protection continued to be mercilessly assaulted, heavy casualties of men, ships and cargoes were inflicted by the blunder of the British government's failure to provide long-range aircraft for detection and destruction of submarines. Counter-measures to the wolf-packs were desperately needed and a number of special actions were urgently developed. If the shadowing U-boat could be located soon enough, it could be driven away before the pack arrived, and if escorts could force the submarines to dive, their periscopes could not be used at night, and their offensive attacks would be crippled. Furthermore, the illumination by star-shells, rocket-flares, and strong searchlights from aircraft would help detect the sub before it could attack, and then force it to dive. But nothing advanced the detection of U-boats and surface crafts like the new radar units which enabled successful attacks against submarines on the surface at night. And the U-boats were increasingly detected and destroyed when they were forced to surface to charge their batteries.

Doenitz had developed the wolf-packs to counter the use of convoys by the enemy. Usually up to ten U-boats would form a patrol line ahead of the course of a convoy and, since an underwater submarine could travel no faster than the convoy's slowest vessel, they picked off the ships as they passed. In the absence of effective defenses, the packs obtained their greatest successes until March 1941, when the situation began to change. Fortunately for the British at the most critical time, the availability and improvement of radar brought better escort detection techniques and tactics and greatly increased the effectiveness of their anti-submarine operations. Equally important, the set-up of a high-level Battle of the Atlantic Committee in England succeeded in organizing and coordinating the military, industrial and scientific resources that proved particularly effective in reducing the loss of shipping, and increased the detection and destruction of the German U-boats.

In early 1941 it was finally recognized that aircraft provided the greatest protection for convoys since few ships were lost when adequate air cover was available. Since the Fleet Air Arm had failed to provide long-range aircraft, the Royal Navy was able to protect only the Western Approaches route to Britain around the north of Ireland. Nonetheless, even when the number of U-boats was greatly increased, the struggle between U-boats and convoy escorts reached a standstill. Fewer ships were being lost since Allied escorts had begun to provide better protection, Franklin Roosevelt was leading the United States into an increasing and more open role in the war, the British were successfully intercepting German radio traffic, convoys were being directed away from the Wolf-packs, and more U-boats and their supply ships were being sunk.

By March 1941, the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* had sunk or captured seventeen ships, the U-boats destroyed forty-one merchant vessels, and German long-range bombers sank forty-one ships. Altogether 139 merchant ships of over one-half million tons were sunk. In May a powerful raiding force consisting of the *Scharnhorst*, *Gneisenau*, the heavy cruiser *Prince Eugen*, and the new *Bismarck*, Germany's only battleship, rushed out into the Atlantic and were spotted by British aircraft near Bergen. In what would become the greatest surface engagement of the European war, the battlecruiser *Hood* and the battleship *Prince of Wales* were sent after them, followed by the main fleet, and the German ships were intercepted between Iceland and Greenland where the four capital ships exchanged fire at a range of fourteen miles. The second or third German round pierced the *Hood's* light World War I armor and she quickly blew up and sank. After the *Prince of Wales* was damaged, it broke off the fight. The *Bismarck* was also struck and, as it headed for the nearest French port, aircraft from the British carrier *Ark Royal* caught her 700 miles from Brest and crippled her with torpedoes. In one of World War II's most famous naval encounters, the British battleships *King George* and *Rodney* soon arrived on the scene and the *Bismarck* was battered into a fiery wreck and sank. Although the *Prince Eugen* managed to reach Brest successfully, the loss of the new and powerful *Bismarck* was a significant turning point in the Battle of the Atlantic. It ended any realistic expectation that Germany's surface ships would play any important role against Great Britain's vastly superior naval forces.

Losses from U-boat attacks, however, began to sharply rise again in mid-1941 and in June sixty-one ships of 300,000 tons were sunk. New defensive assets, however, were rapidly being acquired under the new $7 billion American Lend-Lease Program by which the United States agreed to provide "all aid short of war" for the nearly bankrupt British government. New badly needed escort vessels were provided and the US Atlantic Fleet began using destroyers and flying boats to protect the shipment of lend-lease supplies out some 600 miles into the Atlantic. At southeast Greenland and Bermuda new American airbases were setup and naval facilities were established at Newfoundland. Simultaneously, the production and refitting of British ships in American shipyards was rapidly changing the "neutrality" of the United States, and Canada stepped-up its substantial contributions by extending its escort services out to meet British escorts south of Iceland. Most importantly, for the first time adequate resources were available to escort convoys across the entire Atlantic Ocean.

In spite of such advances the worst shipping losses continued to occur where the convoys were without air cover. Soon the British and the American navies greatly improved their new Western Hemisphere defense plan when the American navy agreed to escort ships, other than those of the United States, as far as the mid-Atlantic which provided some relief for the British shortage of escort craft. By October, losses fell to thirty-two ships of 156,000 tons and no ships were sunk within 400 miles of Britain's Coastal Command, due to enemy fear of long-range bomber attacks. But by December sinkings were less than one-third of the October losses. On the other hand, during the last half of 1941 the fear of German long-range bombers caused the British to add carriers and aircraft catapault-launching facilities which greatly increased their protection of the convoys. By the end of the year, the Atlantic U-boat fleet was reduced to thirty-one after fifty were sent to cover increased Allied activities in the Mediterranean area, and the remaining 150 were involved in refitting, development and training. From April to December 328 ships with 1,500,000 tons were sunk by German and Italian submarines but, since only one-third had been in convoys, evasive routing, expanded escort services and aircraft detection and protection measures were substantially cutting the loss of the merchantmen vessels.

When Germany attacked Russia in June 1941, although Winston Churchill had been one of Soviet Communism's greatest enemies, yet he had immediately

offered Britain's aid to the Soviet Union. Within three months the first convoys were sent to Murmansk, but the critical shortage of ships and limited ability to spare aid, made it impossible to send a convoy every ten days, as had been hoped. Also, the convoys had to pass along the extensive coastline of Norway exposing them to attack by Germany's capital ships and aircraft. In wintertime the ships were forced to pass within thirty miles of German-held territory and the bitter Artic weather subjected both ships and crews to almost impossible conditions of passage. In summer when more northern routes could be taken, 24-hours of daylight resulted in the threat of constant air attacks.

The Russian aid convoys had begun in September 1941 and the first twelve got through safely. But the thirteenth designated as PQ13 lost two ships out of nineteen, PQ15 lost three ships, and PQ16 lost seven. A larger convoy PQ17 consisting of thirty-six merchant ships, sailed in June 1942 and met heavy attacks by German aircraft. When the Admiralty learned that the battleship *Tirpitz* had left her Norwegian port, the convoy escort was ordered to return and the ships to scatter. Left without protection, twenty-four ships were sunk in one of the worst disasters of the Battle of the Atlantic. Three months passed before another convoy sailed for Russia when it's accompanying aircraft held losses to thirteen out of forty ships. Since the presence of Germany's big ships in Norway continued to be a threat, and tied up an equal number of British ships to guard against their use, in September 1943 two midget British submarines successfully penetrated the Norwegian harbor and planted explosive charges on the *Tirpitz's* hull which took her out of action for seven months.

The long and intense struggle to keep Britain's lifelines open continued to hang in the balance, most of her troops were fighting defensively in many far away areas of the world, and the first British victory against the Nazi aggressors had yet to occur. But as Winston Churchill had succeeded in drawing President Roosevelt into an almost full partnership in the defense of freedom, Britain's fate had been saved when the United States first undertook unofficial actions to help Britain, then after Pearl Harbor America assumed a full partnership by providing unlimited manpower and materiel for the common struggle. But at first, once America had declared war against Japan, the Yanks hoped the Brits would bear the major responsibility for the war against Hitler while they fought the Japanese in the Pacific, whom they considered to be their most immediately dangerous

enemy. It soon became evident, however, that Britain was barely surviving and that if the war was to be won, the Battle of the Atlantic had to be won, and that the heavy involvement of the American navy and air forces would be required to maintain the lifelines to Britain.

Factually, Roosevelt had committed the United States to support Great Britain long before Germany declared war on the United States in spite of his prior promise "to keep our American boys out of the war." The overwhelming majority of the American people were opposed to going to war to aid Britain or even to stop the march of Nazi Germany across Europe. But after making available to Britain 100 old destroyers, the Lend-Lease program was created by Roosevelt to help Britain survive without appearing to have violated American neutrality. US ships quickly began to escort convoys to Iceland where they were taken over by British escorts, but when the *USS Kearney* was sunk by a German submarine in October 1941, then American ships were authorized to counter-attack enemy U-boats. Roosevelt believed that war with Germany was inevitable and there is evidence that he increasingly became convinced that there would be an unavoidable conflict with Japan. In fact, during his blunt and tough prewar negotiations with the Japanese, his instructions that American forces should not fire the first shot, some believe, implied that Japan's expected attack on the United States would provide the Americans with the opportunity to openly join the struggle against the Nazis, as well as Japan.

Hitler realized that the United States had been at war with Germany for months, and that was the major reason he committed the unnecessary and fatal folly of invoking a state of outright warfare with the United States, at the very moment that the tide had begun to turn against Germany at Moscow. It was a stupid mistake for he had little to gain and everything to lose by his ill-advised and precipitate declaration of war against the United States. Clearly, it was another emotional reaction of "retaliatory vengeance" against Roosevelt and the United States, for what he considered to have been non-neutral aggressions against the Third Reich, and especially for the massive aid sent to both Britain and the Soviet Union, without which they would not have been able to have maintained their resistance against Germany.

Another principal blunder by the Germans occurred in November 1941 when the Mediterranean was designated as a major theater for submarine operations.

All U-boats were transferred there and to the west of Gibraltar which, at a crucial point, put a stop to the highly effective U-boat operations in the Battle of the Atlantic. The switch was made because the Italian navy had been unable to prevent the British navy from cutting off Axis support of Erwin Rommel's highly successful campaign against the British in North Africa. But the U-boats not only failed to protect the German lifeline to North Africa, their transfer had interrupted the highly successful campaign of the U-boats against American coastal shipping. Doenitz argued that only a part of the U-boat fleet should have been withdrawn from the more important Battle of the Atlantic. To offset the absence of the U-boats, the German surface ships were sent out into the Atlantic with minimal results, and their presence and priority for refitting in the French ports proved to be a substantial obstacle to U-boat operations.

America's entry into the war provided a bonanza for Doenitz's U-boats which were immediately dispatched to cover the increased shipping that was expected from the United States. Some of the new long-range Type IX 1000-ton U-boats, which were refueled at sea by new Type XIV tanker U-boats (Milch cows), were sent to attack the heavy and unprotected traffic along the American seaboard. With only twelve submarines in the area from January to May 1942, they enjoyed more "happy times" by sinking 585 unescorted merchant ships with more than 500,000 tons. The Americans ignored their heavy losses and continued to operate along the coasts without convoys which they foolishly considered to be "too defensive for a navy that had never been defeated." Finally, convoys along the American coastlines began to be accompanied by small K2 class "blimps" which proved to be very successful against submarines. Admiral Doenitz wanted to rush more U-boats to American waters, but Hitler correctly suspected that the Allies planned to invade Norway, and he ordered the U-boats northward to protect the battleship *Tirpitz*, the *Scheer*, *Prince Eugen*, *Hipper* and *Lutzow*(*Deutschland*), which were moored in Norway.

The United States navy had blundered badly by ignoring the recommendations of the British to use escorted convoys along the American coast which would have prevented much of the heavy loss of American lives, ships, and cargoes. Other major American errors included the failure to ban lighted channel markers and to invoke blackouts of city lights along the coast which backlighted easy targets for the U-boats. Once these measures were taken in mid-1942, ship-

ping losses were sharply reduced and the U-boats were soon forced to return to the mid-Atlantic for better hunting. At the same time on the high seas, the Allies had begun to make good progress in the development of new anti-submarine practices which included increased patrols by warships and aircraft, use of the highly effective new Leigh lights for nighttime attacks, together with the new and powerfully effective aerial depth charges.

Still total Allied shipping losses continued to increase with 500,000 tons sunk in February, even more in March, slightly less in April, up to 600,000 tons in May, and 700,000 tons in June. In six months a total of 4,200,000 tons were lost with 90 percent having occurred in the Atlantic-Artic area. Fortunately, the use of America's new coastal convoy system, improvements in Allied anti-submarine operations, and severe winter training conditions in the Baltic, all restricted the U-boat force so that shipping losses declined. But by August German production had greatly increased the number of submarines to 300, of which half were operational, and wolf-packs were hunting Allied and neutral ships off Greenland, the Canadian coast, in the Caribbean, and off the coasts of Brazil and Northwest Africa. Improved U-boats could dive over 600 feet deep in emergency and were being refueled in mid-ocean by their new large submarine tankers. Lastly, the U-boats were able to read the heavily increased convoy radio traffic so that sinkings increased rapidly from July onward. In November alone 119 ships with 729,000 tons were sent to the bottom.

During the first six months of 1942, Axis submarines had sunk 585 ships while only twenty-one U-boats were destroyed. From July to September, 303 Allied and neutral ships were sunk with 1,505,888 tons by Axis submarines of which 1,298,000 tons were by U-boats, and thirty-two U-boats were destroyed. But during the same period the Germans were producing thirty new U-boats per month ready for operations in the Atlantic. When the Germans observed that the Allies were no longer scattering their convoys, but were taking the shortest route by sailing along the great circle, they knew it was due to the continued shortage of escort vessels.

Surprisingly, the US Navy was still not using convoys in the Caribbean area where the U-boats happily found more successful operations against independently operating merchant ships. Meanwhile, the British imposed a blockade with air patrols and specialized anti-submarine groups to harass and attack U-boats as they passed back and forth through the Bay of Biscay. Even when the submarines

attempted to pass at night, or while submerged in daytime, the British were able to detect and attack with increasing success by use of their new short wave radar and with faster aircraft. Unknown to the Germans, the airborne shortwave radar had given their enemy a deadly weapon with increased accuracy at greater ranges.

Especially by means of "great sacrifice and courageous determination," Britain had managed to hold on to its major lifeline across the North Atlantic. Slow convoys from Canada and the United States were organized with ships sailing around seven and a half knots and so-called fast convoys moved at nine or ten knots. An unescorted gap remained between southwest Greenland and the south of Iceland for about 300 miles which could not be covered by land based Allied aircraft and there the U-boats found their prey. With the new American base at Iceland, convoys to Iceland were beginning to be covered by American escorts and, most importantly, the British development of centrimetric radar had revolutionized detection procedures by enabling both escorts and aircraft to spot surfaced submarines enabling attacks at night and in bad weather. The use of the device in conjunction with the new Leigh lights from aircraft became so effective that a fifty percent increase in U-boat losses practically brought enemy operations to a standstill. The fierce tide of battle in the Atlantic had begun to turn.

Meanwhile, three of Germany's most formidable capital ships had sought refuge at Brest from May 1941 to February 1942 where they were in constant danger of air attacks. Their Atlantic raids had accomplished little and Hitler, fearing an enemy invasion of Norway and against his Admirals advice, ordered the ships to make a sudden bold dash through the English Channel in daylight. He was convinced that the RAF Bomber Command would never believe that the Germans would take such a risk and he was right. Heavily protected by the Luftwaffe and by destroyers and E-boats, and with the help of great luck and British blunders, the three ships rushed out on February 11. First, an unfortunate series of mishaps caused RAF patrols to miss the squadron. Later, as the powerful big ships plowed ahead at thirty knots they were spotted by an RAF patrol, but repeated attempts by both destroyers and 675 planes inconceivably failed to hurt the enemy. Both the RAF and the British Navy had been caught by surprise when they were completely unprepared. Although they knew a breakout would occur at some time, few believed it would be made in daylight. The *Scharnhorst* received some damage but all three ships reached Norwegian waters intact in

what Dan van der Vat calls "one of the most spectacular escapes in naval history." It was also said to be the first enemy battle fleet to successfully sail through the English channel since the Spanish Armada in 1588. Unquestionably, it was one of the most embarrassing incidents of unpreparedness and incompetence of the war for Great Britain!

For the Germans, even though their surface ships were forced to remain largely harmless in Norwegian waters, they had tied-up at least an equal number of British vessels to stand guard against their being used elsewhere. Actually, Hitler's tremendous investment in rebuilding Germany's navy to challenge the vaunted Royal Navy had proved to be little more than Nazi propaganda. However, as in World War I, the Germans were successful in using surface raiders disguised as innocent merchant ships for damaging attacks on enemy shipping. In the first year of raider attacks fifty-four ships were sunk totaling 366,000 tons. Equally effective, the ever-present threat of raider attacks required as much counter-action by the British as if they had been warships.

The incredible oversight in not having provided long-range or carrier-based aircraft to cover the lifelines to Britain, particularly in the unprotected Mid-Atlantic gap southeast of Greenland, critically endangered Britain's survival. The area was usually infested with U-boats and the greatest losses continued to occur there. Between January and July over three million gross tons had been sunk and the high loss rate continued for the next six months. Finally, by the end of the year, the use of Escort Groups began to be more effective, but the protection of the convoys continued to be limited by the lack of fast escort vessels. Thus 1942 became the most catastrophic year for the Battle of the Atlantic and only then did Hitler approve Doenitz's request for more and larger U-Boats. But by the time they would become available, it was too late. Had he done so earlier, the tide of victory in the battle at sea would have likely turned to Germany's advantage.

In the meantime, however, American shipyards had begun to mass-produce the famous "Liberty" and "Victory" ships using new prefabricated assembly-line processes which turned out ships quickly in great numbers. The British also produced new, fast and longer-ranged escort frigates which could cross the Atlantic without refueling and could not only outrun a surfaced U-boat, but were equipped with the new radar and detection devices. Most fortunately, radar was a timely and formidable weapon since both escorts vessels and planes remained in short supply

requiring many merchant ships to sail independently without convoys. It was then that high numbers of Allied ship were being sunk by the U-boats.

Soon, however, another important defensive weapon was obtained by the British in the development of the Mark VII ("Dustbins") depth charge which was detonated at 50 to 500 feet by hydrostatic pistols as it sank. By the end of the war more than 200,000 were discharged and 158 U-boats were sunk by depth charges released by British ships. Other very effective advances were also made in the development of airborne anti-submarine tactics with the acquisition of long-range aircraft, the use of radar, Leigh lights and powerful depth charges dropped from airplanes. By the end of the war, 289 German and 11 Italian submarines had been sunk by Allied aircraft.

By the end of 1941, the U-boats at Lorient and La Pallice were placed under protective cover and by the middle of 1942, new submarine pens at Brest, St. Nazaire and Bordeaux were completed. The Germans believed the British blundered by not bombing the pens while under construction instead of giving priority to the bombing of Germany. Once the pens were completed, repeated bombings had no effect on the U-boats or their repair. And when the Atlantic battle was in its most crucial stage in 1943, the British continued to subject the French cities and towns near the sub pens to heavy, but ineffective, aerial bombings. It was a gross waste of resources at a critical time in the desperate struggle at sea.

While the location of the convoys by the U-boats had become easier, the operations of the U-boats against the convoys had become much more difficult. Most of the escort vessels had been equipped with short wave radar and their use in conjunction with aircraft protection subjected submarines to the danger of retaliation, if not destruction. In fact, Doenitz would say that "The enemy's improvements in locating devices and the increasing air cover he was providing filled me with the gravest misgivings for the future." The struggle remained indecisive as one side, then the other, gained scientific developments and techniques which provided temporary advantages. It was a brutal and deathly struggle from the beginning to the very end of the war.

The protection of Atlantic convoy escorts continued to be inadequate and losses remained high. Convoys of forty-five ships generally covering a thirty mile area averaging only five escort vessels made extremely vulnerable targets. At the time flying boats could only reach a distance of 700 miles from Britain and 600

miles from the United States leaving a mid-ocean area of 300 miles uncovered. In the meantime, the operational U-boat fleet grew rapidly from sixty-five in July 1941 to 198 after 47 had been lost at sea. The Germans were building U-boats faster than the Allies could sink them. Furthermore, they were being built with much stronger hulls and would be much more difficult to sink by depth-charges.

At the beginning of 1942, the three major operating bases for the Western Approaches were located at Londonderry, Greenock and Liverpool consisting of twenty-five groups of escorts with about seventy destroyers and ninety-five other craft. In operations short-run destroyers were employed for convoys headed for the Artic and Mediterranean and for liners bringing troops from the US. Long-run destroyers and corvettes escorted convoys crossing the North Atlantic, and Gibraltar convoys and anti-aircraft groups were used to help convoys within the range of German bombers, as well as for the Atlantic and Mediterranean convoys.

By September 1942, the first of the Support Groups was organized with specially trained groups of escort vessels which were sent to convoys when passing through areas of the Atlantic known to be particularly dangerous. Such groups usually contained a small aircraft carrier and an escort carrier in addition to other surface warships. A timely breaking of the enemy's code in December 1942 greatly increased the Allies ability to locate and dispatch Support Groups to areas where special protective measures were needed, but when much of the Support Groups had to be diverted for the TORCH North African invasion, convoy escorts were weakened and losses were heavy. Also, the United States had to withdraw escort vessels for the Pacific and in support of Operation TORCH. Such demands, of course, placed a great strain on the limited remaining Canadian and British escorts and aircraft in the Atlantic so that the mid-Atlantic gap remained uncovered and, unfortunately, heavy losses of merchantmen ships began to occur.

After the United States entered the war U-boat operations off the American coast caused Allied losses to greatly increase again partly due to America's distraction by Japanese attacks and losses in the Pacific. Once convoys were instituted along the coast in July 1942, the U-boats shifted their major actions back to the North Atlantic where few of their craft were being lost. But by the fall, the convoys had to be extended to the Caribbean area as well where numerous oil tankers and other vessels were being sunk. The U-boats were having such success

again that they began to sink ships off the coast of Brazil which brought that country into the war against them.

For all of 1942 Axis submarines had sunk 1,160 ships with 6,266,215 tons mostly by U-boats. In spite of Allied advances in detection and convoy and aerial defensive measures, fewer U-boats were sunk in 1942 than in 1941. The German U-boat command knew that its chances of success against the world's two most powerful navies was becoming hopeless, yet they believed their U-boats were Germany's most effective weapon in defense of their homeland. By February 1943 their resources had rapidly decreased while those of the enemy became more formidable. They also knew their countrymen were desperately fighting in the Soviet Union, North Africa, and Italy, as well as in the skies over Germany, and they were very much aware that a powerful invasion would soon strike Western Europe. Under the circumstances, their accomplishments in the devastating struggle in the Battle of the Atlantic were remarkable.

Germany's production of U-boats by the end of 1942 gave her an operational fleet of 212 compared to only ninety-two at the beginning of the year. While about 7 million tons of new shipping had been provided by the Allies, there was a negative balance of about a million tons from actions by German submarines, aircraft, and surface ships. Imports into Britain fell to one-third less than in 1939. So when Roosevelt and Churchill met at Casablanca in January 1943, it was clear that the continent could not be invaded until after the Battle of the Atlantic had been won. Many important innovations soon followed such as more aggressive counter-attacks on U-boats, replacing slow corvettes and other small craft with more destroyers and frigates as escorts, the formation of support groups and carrier aircraft to supplement the work of the convoy escorts, and finally, stepped-up activity by long-range aircraft.

Bad weather had cut Allied losses in December and January to about 200,000 tons, but by February 1943 losses had doubled, and a month later 108 ships with 627,000 tons were sunk. The worst of the news was that two-thirds of the losses were from convoys. In March, in the biggest convoy battle of the war, two convoys near each other were attacked by thirty-eight submarines and sank twenty-one ships with the loss of only one U-boat. It was the darkest hour of the Atlantic battle and consideration was given to the abandonment of the convoy system. But the turning point of the Battle of the Atlantic had also been reached. The U-

boats had obtained their highest level of efficiency with a total of 170 ships sunk with 693,000 tons. Then as the Allied Support Groups returned from their Mediterranean operations, losses were suddenly reduced to fifty ships while forty-one U-boats were sunk!

Obviously, the German navy could not long sustain such losses which were obtained with the new American escort carriers together with continuing advances in the use of radar, intelligence-gathering, and direction-finding techniques. Subsequently, the U-boat would never again became a serious threat to the existence of Great Britain and, although the Germans attempted to intensify their campaign against the convoy system in the Fall of 1943, only nine ships were sunk with a loss of twenty-five submarines. More Allied warships and planes had been acquired and they had begun to carry the battle to the U-boats. Most significantly, coverage of the convoys by the new longer range aircraft and escort carriers all the way across the Atlantic had given the initiative to the Allies for the first time in the struggle at sea.

In the spring of 1943 the Americans agreed to place their first support group carrier under British command and the new very long-range Liberator aircraft helped enable the Allies to get the best of the U-boats and imposed heavy losses. In fact, Donitz complained to Hitler that new Allied detection devices were giving Germany heavy losses and its "greatest crisis in submarine warfare." As the Allies had begun to place at sea more ships than were being lost, at last it began to indicate that the battle with the U-boats was being won. From January to May only two ships were sunk when escorted by aircraft. Furthermore, a new wavelength was being used on radar which could no longer be intercepted by submarines. And new anti-submarine weapons were being used such as the "Hedgehog" ship mortar and heavier depth charges. Also, the code was changed to prevent the enemy's access to intelligence data and, most importantly, new training and procedures were instituted for more effective cooperation between escorts and aircraft, as well as between sailors and airmen.

So the tide of battle turned against the Kriegsmarine as the U-boats achieved their last decisive victory against Allied convoys in March 1943. Two large convoys had converged in the Atlantic when a pack of thirty-eight U-boats in three groups furiously attacked the huge mass of merchant ships. The battle raged for three days with attacks and counter-attacks between the submarines and the con-

voy escorts and aircraft. Twenty-one ships of 141,000 tons and an escort vessel were sunk in the war's most successful attack of U-boats on convoys. And, just when Doenitz became the commander-in-chief of the Kriegsmarine, his dreaded U-boats had gained their last substantial victory over an enemy convoy. But while the battle had been lost, like the fate of Germany itself, the struggle would go on to the bitter end.

Had Adolf Hitler authorized the construction of more U-boats before and during the early stages of the war, there is little doubt but that the lifeline of Britain would have been severed by the Germans with dire circumstances for the British people. Even so, the U-boats had succeeded in bringing Britain to the brink of defeat with just half the number of submarines planned by the German navy. And, more so than any other phase of the struggle, the Germans credited the Allied victory on the seas to the critically important development of the short wave radar that enabled the detection and successful counterattacks against the U-boats. Just as Hitler's untimely decision to bomb London lost the Battle of Britain, so the timely British development of radar would win the Battle of the Atlantic.

At the Allied conference at Casablanca in January 1943, British-American leaders had agreed that their first priority would be the defeat of the U-boat campaign and that, consequently, the U-boat bases in France were the most important target for the Allied air offensive. Furthermore, by the summer of 1943, the entire area of the convoy routes across the Atlantic were being covered by Allied patrols of long-range aircraft or planes from aircraft carriers. When U-boat losses became excessive along the convoy routes they were forced to seek out less dangerous areas and other theaters of operations, and some even were sent as far as the Indian Ocean with substantial results. Meanwhile, U-boats when refueling from U-tankers had become so vulnerable and with such losses that the practice had to be discontinued and the submarines were forced to make the long journeys back to their bases.

March 1943 was the Allies' worst month, but by May it became Germany's worst month when two convoys, protected by the ASV and the new long-range aircraft, reached Britain without a single loss while six U-boats were sunk. In fact, from May to September 1943, not one ship was lost to a U-boat in the North Atlantic. And although the German's developed new devices and techniques, such as the "homing" torpedo, and the Schnorkel which enabled submarine bat-

teries to be recharged without resurfacing, the U-boat fleet never again would play such a major role in the conflict. But the outcome of the battle had been extremely uncertain. 2,828 Allied merchant ships and 145 warships had been sunk and Germany had produced a total of 1,162 submarines of which 785 were lost. Only Hitler's fantasy that his capital ships might overcome Britain's powerful navy prevented the Kriegsmarine from winning the Battle of the Atlantic. In one of his greatest blunders, he refused to invest more heavily in the U-boat production program which would have enabled his U-boats to starve Britain into submission. Then, with Britain no longer in the war, and in spite of Hitler's many blunders elsewhere, the probability of world conquest by the Nazi Third Reich would have become a realistic possibility.

While most of Britain's large planes were being used to bomb Germany, many efforts were made to bomb German U-boat bases in both France and Germany, and as many as 100 bombers were lost in such attacks between January and June 1943 alone. The deadly contest had been remarkable. In March of 1943 Allied escorts and aircraft attempted to defend convoys against an average of 116 U-boat attacks per day. The Germans had broken the Allied convoy radio code and were able to direct U-boats to the convoys. Incredibly, for example, thirty-nine U-boats had assembled to intercept two Allied convoys. The 77 ships of the two convoys were subjected to a running battle which lasted for eight days but only three U-boats were sunk while nine ships of 140,000 tons were lost.

With Germany on the defensive on all fronts, in June 1943 the U-boat Command reviewed the question of carrying on a struggle certain to result in the continued high sacrifice of men and resources with little chance of winning the battle at sea? Nonetheless, they knew they could not stand idle while the German people were being subjected to incredible death, suffering, and destruction. As military men sworn to protect their homeland and faced with the awesome consequences of "unconditional surrender," they considered it their duty to continue the fight as long as possible. By July the loss figures had risen to thirty percent and in late August new sailings were canceled. But the U-boats were soon equipped with new search receivers, new acoustic torpedoes and improved AA-armaments which reduced their losses. Still, with the increasing presence of Allied air cover, few opportunities were found for successful attacks, and the U-boats commanders were forced to admit that "the era of success had ended."

Toward the end of 1943, the *Scharnhorst* was sent out from her Norwegian port to raid Soviet convoys and was intercepted by the battleship *Duke of York* and a force of cruisers which were screening two convoys. Although struck by the *HMS Norfolk*, the larger and faster *Scharnhorst* successfully escaped from the enemy cruisers, but lost its accompanying destroyers. Then while alone, *Scharnhorst* made the mistake of searching for the convoys and was caught again by the British. In what became known as the Battle of the North Cape, the *Duke of York* battered *Scharnhorst* until the "built to be unsinkable" *Scharnhorst* sank. That left the *Tirpitz* as Germany's last major ship to threaten the convoys to the Soviet Union. Immobilized by RAF attacks in April 1944, *Tirpitz* was later sunk at Tromso and Germany's capital ships were finally removed from Adolf Hitler's dream of world conquest.

Fortunately for the Allies, the fate of Germany's scientific progress with U-boats was somewhat similar to that of missiles and jet aircraft. Had Hitler not made the gross mistake just before the beginning of the war of canceling all scientific projects which could not be completed within one year, several advanced types of U-boats would have been completed before the outcome of the battle had been decided. Consequently, the war was almost over before the German navy found the weapon with which it could have revolutionized undersea warfare, and which would have vastly changed the conflict. There is no doubt that if the new type XXI and XXIII Walther U-boats had been available earlier, Britain would not have been able to maintain her lifelines. The new long-range craft were undetectable by radar when submerged, were capable of high underwater speeds, and they could both operate and attack from safe depths under the surface of the sea. Disastrously for Germany, the first two boats were not available before the end of 1944, and once again, the fate of the Allies was determined by the blunders of their enemy. The development of numerous other experimental weapons had also been delayed which would have had an important impact on the struggle as well, such as the one-man torpedo submarine, the explosive motor boat, and the "Seehund" (Sea Dog) two-man midget submarine.

The ocean conflict, however, soon reached a deadlock when U-boats and convoys acquired through experience and technical development new tactics for survival and destruction and, even with more U-boats at sea, convoy escort operations were improved. The advancement of radar effectiveness and the addi-

tion of expanded aircraft availability resulted in successful actions against the U-boats. Even efforts to catapult fighters from converted merchant ships were attempted, but were not very effective. By the spring of 1943, American-built escort carriers (CVEs), carrying twenty planes each and several MAC (Merchant Aircraft Carrier) ships carrying cargo as well as four Fairey Swordfish planes, were placed in service and not a ship was lost in a convoy in which they were used. The most effective aerial weapon was, however, the American Liberator B-24 which, with added fuel tanks, could remain over the ocean for up to three hours. The British also used their Sunderland Flying Boats, Whitleys, Wellingtons and Halifaxes, but they were limited to short range operations.

The Allies continued to make good progress with their convoy system and the Germans were forced to discontinue the use of hunting groups. Then the U-boats were directed to operate independently, but they obtained little success. Although some further technological advances were made, and there were still 150 undersea craft in operation at the end of the war, the Battle of the Atlantic was lost by Germany primarily because Adolf Hitler had not given the development and production of U-boats the priority which could have won the battle before the naval assets of the United States were applied against her. The Allies had begun to win the war at sea, not only due to the valiant sacrifices of the British merchant marine and the Royal Navy which had gained time for the Americans to enter the conflict, but also by the development of effective cooperative techniques which had enabled the convoys to begin to overcome the vicious and relentless onslaught of the German U-boats. When the writer crossed the Atlantic in a convoy in late 1943, there seemed to be little concern among the men about sub attacks, even though there was one incident when nearby destroyer escorts could be seen firing their depth charges.

Thus highly favorable results continued to be obtained by the Allies in June when there were no attacks in the North Atlantic while the U-boats were withdrawn until better defensive tactics could be developed. German losses continued and from June to August 1943, a total of fifty-eight ships were sunk outside the Mediterranean with half of them going down off South Africa and in the Indian Ocean. While Donitz obtained an increase in his production allotment of U-boats, little success could be attained without greater protection from enemy aircraft. While a new "Walter" type of submarine was developed, trial difficulties

could not be resolved before the end of the war and the new "Schnorkel" had proved to be a highly beneficial device, but only thirty underwater craft were fitted with them by mid-1944.

The use of Germany's capital ships had proved to be a great disappointment and had made only a modest contribution to Germany's war with her enemies. In addition to the destruction of the *Tirpitz*, Germany's largest capital ship, which had played a largely ineffective role in the war, in December 1943, after being warned by ULTRA that the Germans would attempt an attack on a convoy to Russia, the *Scharnhorst* had been successfully attacked and sunk by the largest fleet (sixty-four) of British warships under a single admiral since the Battle of Jutland in World War I. It was described as being the last death struggle between capital ships in a traditional big-gun battle of World War II.

During the first quarter of 1944 losses to U-boats continued to decline with only three ships sunk out of 3,360 that passed through the North Atlantic during that period while thirty-six enemy submarines were lost. In fact, the situation had become so desperate for the German navy that the decision was made that submarine operations in the North Atlantic could not be resumed until better protection was provided. Meanwhile, in anticipation of the Allied invasion of the continent, all but three of the U-boats normally in operation in the area were stationed in the Biscay ports of France. But the German's attained some degree of success with their E-boats (small torpedo craft) and although there were no more than thirty-six of them, they succeeded in becoming the most potentially dangerous operation of the enemy in British waters. Still both the E-boats and the U-boats failed to be effective as anti-invasion weapons and proved to have practically no effect upon the Allied invasion of Normandy. And once the invading forces were ashore and the French ports of Brest, Lorient and St. Nazaire were threatened, the U-boats were moved to Norwegian ports. Then, for the first time since the Fall of France in 1940, merchant ships could use their old route around the south of Ireland to reach Britain largely unmolested.

The first U-boats equipped with the new "Schnorkel" device, which no longer required the undersea craft to surface to recharge its batteries and to draw air during combat operations, appeared in the Spring of 1944. After June 1 no U-boat was sent into the Atlantic without being equipped with the Schnorkel which, in effect, converted even older types of subs into effective underwater weapons.

Actually, the Schnorkel gave new life to the U-boat campaign as operations in the more shallow enemy coastal waters became particularly productive.

On June 6, 1944 (D-Day), the U-boats had been directed to the Normandy invasion area and Doenitz claimed that "The weeks that followed were marked with the hardest fighting of the whole U-boat campaign. Returning captains reported successes which justified the continuation of our operations..." By August 26 all U-boats in the invasion area were recalled. Thirty boats had participated in forty-five operations in which twenty U-boats and 762 men were lost. Twenty-one Allied vessels were sunk and seven were damaged. While the Germans considered their losses to have been severe, they were still not intolerable and while only modest results were obtained, they believed they had helped the struggle of their forces on land. But soon after the American breakout in Normandy, the Germans were forced to abandon their bases in the Bay of Biscay and all U-boat operations were forced to be transferred to Norway.

Unbelievably, when the Allied invasion occurred there were no effective enemy minefields at sea to be overcome and the area was not even patrolled by the German navy. In fact, the enemy naval forces were so weak in the area that only negligible difficulties were encountered. It appeared that the assault was so unexpected in that the entire enemy naval presence consisted only of about thirty E-boats, four destroyers and nine torpedo boats. So there was little that such a small force could do against almost eight hundred enemy warships including six battleships, two monitors, twenty-two cruisers, ninety-three destroyers, 113 frigates and many E-boats, gunboats and other vessels under the complete cover of enemy airpower. The German leadership of the defensive measures to be taken against the expected Allied invasion had been divided and generally ineffective. The German intelligence services had not only failed to provide any reliable information about potential enemy actions—they had been completely misled by Allied deceptive measures to believe that Normandy was only a diversionary landing to draw attention away from the major assault at Calais.

In opposition to the Allied invasion of Normandy there was little that the German navy could do other than to belatedly order its U-boat fleet to the area. E-boats were dispatched against the invasion fleet but did little damage. The dominance of Allied air and naval power was so complete that the invasion fleet was strongly protected against attack by either surface or underwater craft. Even

while waiting to go in on Omaha Beach early on D-Day+1, the author and his men saw or heard little evidence that a battle was underway except for the occasional fire from the big guns of Allied ships. And after three days with the invasion fleet, the only damage we saw by enemy action involved the sinking of the nearby troopship *Susan B. Anthony* which had struck a mine. There was certainly no sign to be seen of the enemy navy or air. By the time of the Allied invasion and after the massive losses and defeats on the Eastern Front, both the German navy and air forces had exhausted most of their defensive assets and little was left to be used to stop the enemy on either front.

Although the unfavorable weather had caused the Germans to take no special protective measures, and the Luftwaffe was blocked by masses of Allied planes from penetrating the invasion area, there was little justification for the failure of the Luftwaffe and the Kriegsmarine to have provided reconnaissance and intelligence for more effective preparations to resist the largest amphibious military operation in history. Incredibly, there was no effective opposition of any kind by either Germany's air force or navy against more than 14,000 Allied aerial sorties and 5,000 vessels involved in the crossing from southern England and Wales through the Bay of the Seine during June 5-7 practically without loss except from a few mines. Under the existing circumstances, there was little that the German navy could do other than to belatedly order its U-boat fleet to the area which produced no effective results. And the dispatch of a small number of E-boats to attack the invasion fleet resulted only in the sinking of one Danish destroyer.

But even after the loss of the Battle of Normandy on through the last months of the war, and in spite of the heavy Allied bombing of Germany, the Kriegsmarine still managed to increase its fleet of U-boats by withdrawing from long-range Atlantic operations, increased production, use of their new Schnorkel device, and the quick repair of bombing damage. As late as January 1945, thirty new submarines were made ready for sea duty including some new improved models, and by March 1945, with 463 submarines the fleet had reached its greatest number of the war. Allied bombing had little effect upon production until the last two months of the war when mine-laying from the air had seriously limited the placement of U-boats into service by restricting their trials and training. If the German navy had been able to deploy the new-type U-boats earlier an effective blockade of Britain might have been restored.

Two unfortunate incidents occurred which completely changed the nature of the conflict at sea and which enabled Germany to almost successfully blockade Britain and eliminate her from the war had been due to the blunders of France and Ireland. The inexcusable quick collapse of the Third Republic and the rout of the French and British armies in 1940 gave the Germans possession of the French ports that doubled the range and power of their U-boat fleet. And in a "shameful and unforgivable act," Ireland's refusal to assist the Allies in the war against Germany by denying the use of her coastlines for defense, while using the food and supplies which had been carried by the convoys amidst great sacrifice, contributed greatly to the difficulties and the losses which came so close to causing the fall of Britain which would have cast in doubt the final outcome of the war itself.

All the same, Allied progress against the enemy continued to be greatly increased on land, in the air and at sea as the end of the war approached. Soviet forces swept across East Europe from Warsaw to Berlin, British-American forces raced across Germany and into Austria and Czechoslovakia and rapidly approached the Alps through Italy. The Strategic Air Bombing Offensive continued to obliterate much of Germany's industrial and communication facilities, the Luftwaffe was reduced to largely ineffective defensive measures, and the Allied navies brought German naval forces to a standstill. As they would report after the surrender, German generals and admirals claimed that an "oppressive superiority in material" had prevented them from continuing the struggle.

Little was accomplished by the U-boats in the closing weeks of the conflict when activity was limited to the east and northeast shores of Britain. Surprisingly, however, the productive capacity of the German's had continued to almost the very end of the war. During 1944 sixty-two E boats and eighty-seven minesweepers had been built while air raids limited the construction of other types of craft, and by January-March 1945, amazingly, twenty-six U-boats were being produced monthly. Throughout the war the Third Reich produced 1,162 submarines of which 830 were operated at sea, and 784 were lost including 696 destroyed by enemy action. When the war ended on May 8, 1945, the Germans surrendered 159 U-boats after 203 had been scuttled by their crews.

The Battle of the Atlantic lasted for almost six long years and the Allies, principally the British, sank 632 German submarines. The Axis countries, mostly Germany, sank 2,828 ships with almost fifteen million tons, and the U-boats

sank 175 Allied warships which were mainly British. In summary, sixty-one percent of the Allied ships were sunk when not in convoy, nine percent were convoy stragglers, and thirty percent were sunk in convoy. Finally, very few ships were lost in convoys that were covered with aircraft escorts. Of the 40,900 men who served in Germany's submarine service, 25,870 were killed and 5,000 were captured. An awesome rate of sixty-three percent were killed with a total casualty rate for the undersea service of seventy-six percent!

While the Germans fought to maintain an impenetrable siege of Britain, the British people struggled valiantly to maintain not only their sustenance, but also the flow from the new world of men and supplies with which the Allied campaign for the reconquest of Western Europe could be launched. Simply, it was described as an industrial struggle involving the Allied effort to build more ships and deliver more goods than could be destroyed by Germany's submarine warfare. It was further characterized as having been a desperate scientific competition that was waged over the technological development and detection of surface and underwater vessels which became as fierce as the battle itself.

Germany's remarkable scientific accomplishments almost won the war on several fronts including the war at sea, but their efforts to produce an effective small radar for subs and aircraft were initially plagued with difficulties. Their U-boats were in a class by themselves being larger, faster and more powerful than those of their enemies. Their scientific developments were revolutionary including such important innovations as the rocket-assisted bouncing bomb and the radio-controlled glider bomb with its first weapon television system. But fortunately like so many of the German "secret weapons," they came too late to be of influence on the course of the war.

The German magnetic mine had become the first secret weapon of the sea war. When ships began to sink with no evidence of the presence of submarines, it became apparent that the existing methods of mine-sweeping were no longer effective, and that the Germans possessed a new and deadly weapon. Fortuitously, it was learned from a prisoner that a new and deadly magnetic mine was being planted by U-boats and aircraft which were detonated when the metal hulls of passing ships completed their electric circuit. Just when Britain's shipping was critically endangered, the miraculous discovery was made that when a strong current was periodically charged through a cable attached around the hull

of a ship, it's magnetic field was "degaussed," and the mines were not set off. An acoustical torpedo was also developed by the Germans which picked up the sounds of a ship's engines and directed the torpedo to the ship, but that too was countered by the British by towing noisemakers behind their ships which misled the torpedoes.

The British had greatly improved their ASDIC detection device from World War I but the Germans successfully countered it by applying a rubber coating outside their subs as insulation. Radar, however, had the greatest effect on the determination of both detection and ranges. Auspiciously for Britain in both the war at sea as well as in the air, eighteen radar stations built just before the war had begun to cover the coast from Dundee to Portsmouth and were operated continuously until the end of the war. Germany's development of radar was greatly restricted by Hitler's earlier limitation of banning all scientific research not productive within a year. Furthermore, German scientists had made a critical error when they decided to work in decimeter wave-lengths when the Allies chose to use short waves in centimeters. When U-boat losses rapidly increased the Germans were shocked to find that the small radar sets carried on Allied aircraft had in effect defeated their U-boat campaign. Even though larger and greatly improved U-boats continued to be built with the revolutionary Schnorkel device, it was too late. The Battle of the Atlantic had already been won by the Allies!

Other technical improvements by the British involved their new airborne ASV radar and a new High Frequency Direction-Finding capability called the "Huff Duff" which enabled the interception of the wireless activities between U-boats and the detection of their "wolf pack" operations. But in spite of such new innovations unacceptable losses continued. The main problem was that the Allies had failed to sink the U-boats as fast as the industrious Germans could build them. During 1941 the Germans lost only thirty-five U-boats while the Allies lost 429 ships with two million tons of shipping. The figures became increasingly worse during 1942 when eighty-seven U-boats were lost and 1,155 ships with six million tons were sunk. Yet the Germans had built 212 more U-boats. In fact, Allied losses of 650,000 tons had so greatly exceeded British production capabilities that had Doenitz been able to maintain his objective of sinking 800,000 tons per month, Britain's main source of supply from the United States would have been

cut-off and Britain would have been forced out of the war. His goal was being rapidly achieved when suddenly the struggle had turned against Germany.

In spite of the sweeping defeat of Germany's military forces, and the vast disruption and destruction of Germany by Allied bombing which destroyed many U-boats in their berths, from sixty to seventy U-boats remained in operation almost to the end of the war. When the final surrender was ordered on May 8, 1945 by Admiral Doenitz, as the last leader of Germany's Nazi government, forty-nine U-boats were still in operation at sea. While many subs had been scuttled by their crews before the surrender, none of the German warships were destroyed. At last the Battle of the Atlantic was over, and the longest and one of the most desperate and difficult battles of the war, was finally brought to an end.

Winston Churchill considered the Battle of the Atlantic to have been the most important event of the conflict when he said that it "was the dominating factor all through the war. Never for one moment could we forget that everything happening elsewhere...depended ultimately on its outcome." He also said that "The only thing that ever really frightened me during the war was the U-boat peril..." It was a terrible ordeal for its participants on both sides of the conflict. Richard Hough claimed that "The Second World War demanded more of its sailors than any other in history in endurance and the unremitting need to face danger, which included lethal weapons and an ever-increasing need for vigilance night and day." Author Ronald Seth went so far as to call the struggle of the convoys to have been "The Fiercest Battle" of World War II.

A final total of 2,452 Allied ships and nearly thirteen million tons of cargo were sunk during the Battle of the Atlantic. Britain alone suffered the loss of 30,248 merchant seamen and the Royal Navy lost 73,642 men during the war with the vast majority of the losses occurring in the Atlantic where the Germans sank 175 mostly British warships. The RAF Coastal Command lost 5,866 men and 1,777 aircraft and the Royal Canadian Navy lost 1,965 men, more than the United States navy whose greatest losses were in the Pacific in the war with Japan. More than 140,000 British merchant seamen had volunteered to serve their country and most of their casualties were on tankers which were the most important targets for the enemy and the cause of the most horrible deaths and suffering from the flaming oil after the ships had been sunk.

After the war, Admiral Doenitz admitted that as early as December 1943 the Allies had "rendered the U-boat war ineffective" by their success in the scientific development of detection. More U-boats were being destroyed than the Germans could build, and while 2,700 British, Allied and neutral ships were sunk, Germany lost 783 submarines and 32,000 men. Doenitz claimed that Germany's failure to support the U-boat campaign with adequate long-range air reconnaissance and protection was one of the biggest German mistakes of the war—that at times only one aircraft was available for a single sortie which was restricted to the area southwest of Ireland, and that between July and December 1940, the U-boats were not able to undertake a single combined operation with success.

Clearly, the ability of the British to decipher the German codes made the difference between victory and defeat in many phases of the European war, and especially in the Battle of the Atlantic. The German Navy was very security-conscious since its contact with all operations of its fleet was by radio and it used some thirteen different codes. A special "Hydra" code was employed for submarine operations which the British were unable to crack until they obtained an "Enigma" machine and its codebook after a U-boat was captured in May 1941. From that time forward, the Allies could reroute convoys to avoid U-boats and they were able to locate and destroy the tanker submarines. The Germans, however, refused to recognize such losses and that their "wolf-packs" were being effectively avoided. Instead of concluding that their codes had been broken by the enemy, they made the mistake of claiming that the new losses were the result of treachery.

With victory or defeat constantly hanging in the balance throughout the battle on the seas, almost any circumstance could have influenced the outcome. As in the Battle of Britain, had the Germans not made several critical mistakes and blunders, the battle could have been won. Perhaps the most damaging blunder occurred when the Fuehrer decided that since the war would be a short war in Germany's favor, all scientific research with military ramifications that could not be completed within one year were canceled. He also made the critical mistake of giving the Luftwaffe and the Wehrmacht higher rearmament priorities over those of the Kriegsmarine so that when the extra U-boats could have been the margin of victory, they were not available. Additional fatal omissions occurred when their plan for the defeat of the Western Powers failed to provide for the prompt invasion of the defeated British Isles, and when they failed to produce aircraft carriers and

long-range aircraft to protect their ships and submarines. Another inexcusable mistake involved the piecemeal commitment of their unprotected capital ships which were largely wasted just when the U-boats had reached their greatest effectiveness. But Hitler's most ridiculous blunder that brought little benefit and the greatest harm to Germany occurred when he declared war against the United States. That, in addition to the Allied capture of a U-boat with its Enigma machine and codebook intact, insured Germany's defeat in the all-important Battle of the Atlantic.

The Allied shipments of war materials and aid had been massive and decisive for the survival of the Soviet Union. Beginning in 1941, 811 ships were sent to Russia via Artic convoys with fifty-eight being sunk and thirty-three returned to port. Thus 720 ships arrived safely having transported vast quantities of assistance to the Soviet Union by the northern route. According to Winston Churchill, Britain alone dispatched forty convoys with more than 4,000,000 tons of aid to the Soviets that included 5,000 tanks and 7,000 aircraft of which 300,000 tons were lost. General John Deane reported that the United States Lend-Lease program shipped by both the northern and southern routes over fifteen million tons for the Soviet Union which included 427,000 trucks, 15,000 other vehicles, 35,000 motorcycles, 2,600,000 tons of petroleum, 2,000 locomotives, 10,000 freight cars and vast quantities of guns, ammunition, clothing, raw materials, industrial equipment, and food. Alexander Werth states that between June 1941 and April 1944 the United States also sent 6,430 planes, 210,000 automobiles and huge quantities of other supplies. British and American specific deliveries to the Soviets resulted in the loss of a total of ninety-eight merchant ships and eighteen warships while the German attacks against the shipments cost them their battlecruiser *Scharnhorst*, three destroyers, and thirty-eight submarines.

The Allies also made numerous mistakes and blunders which might have changed the outcome of the Battle of the Atlantic. Even after having almost lost the struggle at sea to the Germans in World War I, the British made the critical mistake of believing that, due to the success of their detection system in the previous war, there was no need to expect nor prepare for another onslought by German U-boats in World War II. In fact, the world's major seapower had been inexcusably unprepared to protect Britain from invasion. Incredibly, once the war got underway there was serious opposition within the government and the navy against the convoy system which seriously imperiled the maintenance of the

lifelines of the nation. Instead, the substitution of the so-called "hunting groups" for enemy submarines proved to be ineffective, wasted limited assets, and threatened the national sustenance at a time of great crisis.

Indeed, most critically, the absence and shortage of escort craft to maintain the lifeline of the nation was completely indefensible. While the status of the Royal Air Force generally symbolized the recognition of the important role aircraft had assumed in warfare, the RAF Coastal Command lacked aircraft, and particularly long-range aircraft, which were necessary for the detection and destruction of enemy submarines. Little short of stupidity permitted a German sub to invade the harbor at Scapa Flow to sink the *Ark Royal*, and the escape of Germany's capital ships through the English Channel in broad daylight was inexplicable. Across the Atlantic, the failure of the American navy to anticipate and to respond to the U-boat massacre of its coastal shipping was scandalous, and the lack of escort ships and long-range aircraft to accompany America's massive convoys of supplies to Britain and the Soviet Union was a costly indictment of the government and the navy.

The survival of Britain had been inexcusably threatened and her naval and merchant ship personnel, as well as the people and allies of Britain, were unnecessarily subjected to great loss and suffering. Winston Churchill himself regarded the desperate struggle with the U-Boats as Britain's greatest danger of the war and believed that, had the Germans staked everything on their undersea warfare, they would have won the battle. But there were numerous other important aspects of the long hard struggle which, had they been changed or modified, would have likely brought about a different result to the conflict. In fact, the loss of the Battle of the Atlantic could have been as fatal to an Allied victory, and to the survival of world freedom, as would have been the Battle of Britain. The principal difference appears to be that in the fight at sea the British finally overcame their major errors, while in the struggle in the air, it was the Germans who committed mistakes that were even more fatal.

Unquestionably, the most crucial campaign of World War II was not won so much by the number of men and the abundance of supply as in many other phases of the war, but mainly by the uncommon valor and the unparalleled sacrifice, particularly, of the British people under some of the most adverse circumstances of the entire conflict. It was a terrible struggle under great losses and

suffering in which only a miracle of faith in the ultimate victory of right over evil could sustain a greatly out-numbered and, in a number of ways, defenseless nation. Not only were the lifelines to Britain desperately and barely sustained, but also vast quantities of men, military equipment and supplies were transported successfully to Britain which would later enable the liberation of Western Europe.

Finally, due to the magnificent courage and total sacrifice of Allied merchantmen, sailors and airmen, as well as the ordinary men and women who built the ships and produced the goods, the war's longest battle, and in many ways the most difficult struggle, was finally won.

Chapter 15

Secret Weapons

It is too awesome to even speculate what the state of human society would be today if Adolf Hitler's Germany had been victorious in World War II. It is a fact, however, that if the demonic Fuehrer had understood and supported the revolutionary potentials of Germany's scientific achievements with new weapons of warfare, the domination of the Nazis would have gained control of much, if not all, of the civilized world. With the brutally militant Germans in control of powerful and devastating new "secret weapons," vast areas of the world would have been destroyed, most if not all of the democratic and independent societies would have been annihilated by atomic missiles and genocide, and the few free human beings who survived would have been subjected to Nazi slavery and extinction. Even if democracy had somehow been able to hold out in the Americas, World War III would have been inevitable in which little, if any, of a civilized society could survive. Then finally, after a nuclear holocaust, much of the earth would have become an atomic wasteland peopled only by the survivors of the Nazi "Super-Race."

Undoubtedly, such possibilities would have become reality had Hitler successfully developed and fully applied earlier in World War II the power and the devastating capabilities of his "Secret Weapons." But he unintentionally blundered by delaying the fulfillment of the potential of Germany's scientific attainments which have transformed much of the world we live in today. It was the Nazi dictator himself who committed the grave errors which reversed his opportunity to attain his goal of the German conquest of Europe and, in effect, saved his enemies from defeat and destruction. Most fortunately for mankind, his errors and mistakes not only lost the war for Germany, but also prevented the worldwide domination of the Nazis which would have been followed by the nazification and

annihilation of much of the civilized world. Ironically, Hitler's neurotic hate and vengeance, as well as his general personification of evil itself, inadvertently saved much of mankind from the torture, slavery and extermination of a Nazi Hell on earth.

If Adolf Hitler had not so disastrously interfered with the German scientific capability, a vast number of new and more horrible means for the mass killing of mankind would have been provided for the Fuehrer to fulfill the prophecy that his "Secret Weapons" of revenge would turn the tide and win the war for the Fatherland. Largely unknown at the time, the Germanic talent for scientific discovery had produced dramatic and revolutionary high-tech progress towards atomic energy, rocketry and missiles, jet aircraft, homing and guidance systems, proximity fuses, radar, fire control equipment, target detection devices, and numerous new systems for the greatly increased killing-power of armed conflict. So long as the war lasted, it was generally believed by Germany's opponents that Hitler's claims for "Secret Weapons" were little more than desperate propaganda which failed to shake Allied confidence in an ultimate victory over Nazism. But after the war, the West was startled to learn that there had been a substantial basis for Hitler's desperate boasts and that the number and potential importance of Germany's new war-making weapons vastly exceeded all Allied estimations. Only then was it apparent that an Allied victory had been mercifully gained with the help of the most fortuitous and providential means.

Today, it is well-known that the German scientists successfully produced astounding new technologies whose military applications could have changed the outcome of World War II. Obviously, the production and use of the atomic bomb by the Germans before the success of the Americans would have disastrously altered the history of mankind. Certainly the production and use of greater numbers of rocket missiles and jet aircraft earlier in the war could have greatly influenced the war's outcome. And there is no question but that the Germans had the capability to have won the war with their "secret weapons" had the research and production of the scientists not been hampered by the Fuehrer. Experts say that if, like the Allies, he had organized a central authority for managing and coordinating scientific development and production with high priorities and adequate funding, he could have achieved the superiority in military armaments which would have won the war for Germany. Had he done so, it

likely would have overcome most of the blunders he committed throughout the conflict. That he failed to do so can now be seen to have been possibly his greatest blunder of World War II.

Traditionally, Germans gave their greatest respect and highest status in recognition of academic and scientific accomplishments. But when the Nazis seized power, the intellectual and scientific community was generally ignored while engineers and technicians were employed to urgently build-up Germany's armed forces. Every available intellectual and industrial resource was mobilized to produce the most massive and destructive weapons of destruction possible at the earliest date. Having ignored the Versailles restrictions, the industrialists were ready and waiting to become once again what author William Manchester calls the "Anvil of the Reich," and massive propaganda programs were undertaken to promote the scientific development of new armaments to show the world the "superiority of the German race" and to give the German nation its proper role as a world power.

But early and spectacular armed victories proved to be Germany's undoing. With the stunning success of the new German "blitzkrieg" tactics which had brought about quick victories over Poland and France, Hitler became convinced that his "lightning war" would soon be over. He believed that his powerful new Wehrmacht was invincible and that he could conquer Europe with the weapons and tactics that had already proven to be so spectacularly successful. With the war quickly over, he thought that Germany's great technical talents would be used to increase the efficiency and the killing-power of his existing planes, guns and tanks. Consequently, the immensely important decision was made for Germany's production personnel and facilities to concentrate on short-term military needs and to give low priority for research and development for long-range projects. He was convinced the war would be over by 1943 at the latest, and he wanted no resources to be wasted on projects which could not be completed by that time. Otherwise, all projects were to be abandoned. By failing to understand the importance of giving first priority to Germany's early lead in research and development of nuclear energy, rockets, guided missiles and jet propulsion, the Nazi Fuehrer committed the blunder which would bring disaster to his dream of world domination.

The atomic bomb was, of course, the ultimate secret weapon of the war and it was well-known long before the war that the Germans were more advanced in

nuclear research than any other nation. Germany's Otto Hahn had been the world's first physicist to discover the fission of the uranium nucleus and, by early 1940, German scientists were certain they were on the threshold of a tremendous break-through which would give Hitler's Wehrmacht an explosive power so great and intimidating that Nazi Germany would surely dominate the world. Renowned scientists worldwide reasoned that the German physicists would maintain their lead in nuclear research and would likely be first to develop the capability for a nuclear bomb. They also believed that a nation ruled by the brutal Nazis, which imprisoned and liquidated Germans as well as the Jews, would not hesitate to use the atomic bomb to win the war. In fact, American scientists Arthur Compton, James Bryant Conant and Ernest Lawrence were so concerned over the possibility that the Germans might produce and use the bomb that they urged Franklin Roosevelt to greatly advance American atomic research and development. But a nuclear program backed by the government did not get underway until after the United States entered the war. By then it was believed that the Germans were far ahead in atomic research and that, if he had it, Adolf Hitler would never hesitate to use it even if much of the world was destroyed in the process.

By September 1941, the German physicists had determined that they were on the verge of developing a military application of the atom bomb and the non-German scientific community expected that they might be successful in making the first bomb at any time. But an incredibly miraculous blunder by the Germans scientists was to intervene which was of immense importance to the fate of mankind. Unknown to the outside world, just as the Germans felt they were ready to make the breakthrough in their struggle to split the atom, having just reached what David Irving calls "the brink of criticality," a disastrous miscalculation was made by Professor Walther Bothe which led to the belief that graphite could not be used to moderate a uranium pile. As a result, in what seemed to be an act of Providence, the unconfirmed erroneous conclusion meant that all future testing by German physicists would be dependent upon the availability of heavy water, a scarce commodity available only at the Vemork Plant in Norway. Consequently, the work of the German nuclear experts began to fall behind, while the American program, relying upon the use of graphite as a moderator, would surge substantially ahead. Soon the German scientists, who were

not aware that their work had been sidetracked, were forced to conclude that "The war will be over long before the first bomb is built."

Meanwhile, the American and British scientists were greatly concerned about German progress on nuclear research. Finally, the Americans had managed to convince President Roosevelt to support an expanded research program to include completion of a centrifuge plant capable of producing adequate uranium 235 to make a bomb per month by December 1943. In the meantime, while greatly fearing Germany's capabilities, they did not know that Hitler had continued to be indifferent to any scientific development not of immediate assistance to winning the war with the Soviet Union. In fact, the SS had continually harassed and imprisoned many nuclear scientists on charges of disloyalty or, in many cases, had reassigned them to other insignificant scientific projects. Ironically, the Nazis and the Fascists had intentionally driven into exile the two men who contributed most to the American development of the atomic bomb, Albert Einstein of Germany and Enrico Fermi of Italy.

As early as 1942, German scientists had the opportunity to gain the interest and the financial support of Albert Speer, Minister of Armaments and War Production. Speer had been told that the scientists were developing a weapon to "annihilate whole cities" which would be Germany's only chance of winning the war. However, Professor Walter Heisenberg, head of the nuclear research program, had informed Speer that while a scientific solution had been found, it would require years to develop a atomic device even with the full support of the government. When Speer learned that only limited development funds could be utilized he was led to believe that there was no way that the project could influence the outcome of the war. In effect, he said, "we scuttled the project to develop an atom bomb." Still, even after the defeat of Germany had become obvious and the German scientists realized their goal could not be reached, they continued their efforts to make progress in the belief that it might be used to obtain better conditions for Germany from the Allies. Actually, underground bunker experiments continued until the end of January 1945. Then, on the approach of the Russians, the atomic pile was moved from Berlin to Hagerloch where most of the physicists were found and removed to the West. And the war was almost over before special scientific teams, following the advance of the Allied forces, discovered that German efforts to develop an atom bomb had failed.

The extent to which Nazi Germany and the United States were competing to develop an atomic bomb which would force the other to sue for peace was not revealed until the war in Europe ended. In fact, during the war it was widely believed by the Americans and the British that the Germans were so far ahead of anyone else there was no way they could lose the race. There was also great concern that as the end of the conflict approached, the fanatic Nazis would unleash an atomic bomb in a final desperate effort to win the war. As Hitler spoke more and more about his miracle "X" weapons, it was feared that the fanatic Fuehrer might unleash at any time a "cataclysmic explosion to end the war in an atomic Armageddon." In fact, as late as the fall of 1944, when the Allies rapidly advanced across France from Normandy, they were distressed to learn that the entire French supply of thorium, a substitute for uranium, as well as large quantities of uranium in Belgium, had been shipped to Germany. Miraculously for mankind in general, the Nazi Fuehrer had overlooked the potential of atomic energy and the lead of German scientists which could have, with his support, been successful in the search for the awesome power of the atom and, in spite of the otherwise dominating possession of manpower and resources by the enemy, could have given Germany the final and fatal victory.

It was in the field of rockets and guided missiles, however, that the dedication and skill of the German scientists obtained their most spectacular accomplishments. Towards the end of the war, the Allies were shocked to discover that the Germans were producing new and terrifying weapons of "vengeance" with a vast destructive capability surpassing anything previously known. It was feared that the desperate and fanatic Nazis might even recover from their military disasters in Russia and Normandy, and yet force a victory of devastation and horror with their new weapons of terror. Awesomely, it seemed that guided missiles, perhaps with atomic warheads, could be launched at supersonic speeds through the stratosphere from great distances which could conceivably devastate even the United States, as well as many other areas of the world. It appeared to be as if a sudden terror from outer space personally threatened the safety and morale of every human being. Killing had become uncontrollably impersonalized by robot bombs and missiles and, it was said, they seemed to be invulnerable to human counter-action and appeared to be invincible.

Uniquely among the countries of the world, Germany possessed vast industrial complexes which had been built largely for the production of armaments much of which had been supplied to other countries. The powerful new cannons of Krupp had won the war with France in 1870. World War I had seen the introduction of new and ever-more destructive weapons which would surely have won the war for Germany had not vast new supplies of men and equipment arrived from America in the last year of conflict. The restrictions of Versailles, which outlawed the old weapons, created the incentive for the development of new weapons to increase Hitler's war-making power and to revive the economy of the Fatherland. As one of the world's most industrially developed countries based on the dedicated hard work of the German people, Hitler's Reich quickly established itself with the most modern military equipment available in Europe.

With the expectation of large military orders for their products, especially from the Army and the Navy, most German industries undertook their own research and development. In the field of aviation, however, Hitler and Goering were convinced that airpower would be decisive in future warfare and concentrated resources and technical capabilities for the maximum development of Germany's airpower. Thus the priority, over-confidence and independence of the Luftwaffe created difficulties which later lead to military disasters. But generally prior to the war, Germany's scientific and industrial capacities produced revolutionary innovations that were vastly beyond those of any other nation. In fact, if Hitler and Goering had not blundered catastrophically by deferring priorities for the scientific development of new missiles, aircraft, and weapons, the course of the war would have been greatly altered by the incredible accomplishments of Germany's development of it's new missiles, aircraft and weaponry prior to 1945.

Long before World War II, with new designs and more powerful aircraft, the Germans had seized the lead in aerial development and had set many international speed and distance records. But it was an American, Dr. Robert H. Goddard, who first succeeded in launching a liquid-filled rocket in 1926. By 1929, the Germans commenced research on rocket propulsion for military purposes and it became the first government to concentrate on the development of the vast potential of rocketry. Within two years a rocket-powered aircraft fueled with benzene and liquid oxygen was flown up to an altitude of one mile. Numerous secret projects followed and, within another two years, research on

manned rocket flights was underway recognizing its promise to become the most powerful weapon for the future. The Army, which considered aircraft and rockets both to be forms of artillery, formed two separate research efforts for solid-fueled rockets and liquid-fueled rockets.

The German Army Testing Office acquired adequate funds and designated Captain Walter Dornberger to build a team of scientists to develop and test the vast potential of rockets first at the Kummersdorf proving ground. There the A-series rockets were first developed from which the V-2 would eventually follow. Designated the Aggregate-1, and fueled with alcohol and oxygen, the motor successfully developed a 660lb thrust, but the stabilization of the rocket was unsatisfactory, and the project was abandoned. In early 1935, a new A-2 project attained altitudes of over 6,000 feet and the tests progressed so satisfactorily that they were moved in 1937 to better and larger facilities at the Army proving ground at Pennemunde. In addition, research was undertaken at 200 colleges and universities throughout Germany to support rocket development.

In the meantime, the technical office of the Air Ministry had taken over the development of aircraft, aerial weapons, equipment and communications. Various specialized divisions were given the task to develop new and improved motors, communications, radar, weapons, bomb-aiming equipment, torpedo-dropping techniques, pilotless aircraft, and other aspects of aerial warfare. Furthermore, the Goring Aerial Weapon Establishment was involved in at least forty secret research projects such as armor improvements and ballistic testing. Actually, there were so many independent military research facilities which operated throughout the war that the existence of many of them was completely unknown to other branches of the government.

But when Dornberger's team of enthusiastic and ambitious young scientists became settled at Pennemunde in 1937, they were determined to successfully produce all kinds of rocket-powered weapons which would clearly establish Germany's military supremacy. Their task was to produce top-secret weapons involving high-velocity rockets, guided missiles, rocket-assisted torpedoes and all possible weapons which might help Germany to win a war. Adolf Hitler, however, convinced of the invincibility of his Wehrmacht and the victory of his "lightening war" against his strongest enemies, held little interest in long-term scientific developments for the future, and most scientific endeavors proceeded

with only limited financial resources. Nonetheless, Dornberger assembled a highly skilled team of 200 scientists which, fortunately for Germany, included Wernher von Braun, a youth of only 19 years with a background in rocket experiments, who had been fascinated by the exciting opportunity to create rockets which might someday "reach the stars."

Once Hitler had decided to make war against his neighbors, the German War Ministry demanded the development of an "ultimate weapon." A rocket was specified to be capable of successfully delivering undetected warheads of a ton or more of high-explosives to Paris and London. Obviously, it required a huge missile which needed to be mobile. Since attacks by the enemy would be likely, launching sites should be changeable but, most importantly, because of the danger of misdirection, it had to be reliable! Many thought it to be impossible. The guidance and control system on the model A-3 proved to be undependable and underpowered. With an European war likely, there was great pressure to accomplish the objective for missiles in a short time.

By 1939, numerous projects were secretly underway involving jet propulsion and rocket-powered aircraft, as well as rockets, which had placed Germany substantially ahead of other countries with new advanced weapons. There were also many disappointing setbacks and great difficulties to overcome. In rocketry alone, the determination of the shape and size of the missile, the use of aluminum and sheet steel, formulation of a fully-automatic liquid-propelled motor with adequate thrust, the relationship between fuel consumption and thrust, proper methods of injection and combustion, the cooling system, and automatic stabilization and control, were among what appeared to be the almost impossible problems to be solved before the penetration of space could become a reality.

The Pennemunde experimental rocket center was located on an island in the Northeast of Germany on the Baltic Sea. It was a huge facility and eventually employed more than 2,000 scientists working primarily to develop and successfully launch the A-Series of rockets. The third prototype, the A-3, had no payload and was strictly an experimental missile, but Dornberger and his associates were already planning a large rocket that would serve as heavy artillery by trajecting an explosive charge for at least 160 miles. By using a rocket that could be transported by motor vehicle, yet requiring a liquid-fueled motor with a thrust of at least 25 tons, they calculated that a one-ton payload fired into space, which

was practically devoid of air, at an elevation of 45 degrees with a velocity of 3,350 mph, might reach a target 172 miles away. The young Germans excitedly anticipated new discoveries of spectacular scientific accomplishment!

But even after years of strenuous work and progressive adjustments, trajectory problems continued to delay testing of the A-4 project. By October 1939, three A-5 rockets were prepared for flight. The first two, with a total weight of about 2,000 pounds, were launched vertically and after forty-five seconds of burning successfully rose to a height of about five miles and descended by parachute. The third was set to rise vertically then to assume the angle required for a great distance. After only four seconds of flight, the nose tilted eastward and reached a height of two and a half miles at four miles distance when the parachute was released. Later tests of the A-5 reached heights of nearly eight miles and a range of eleven miles. It was an incredible achievement and the German rocket team had unquestionably made one of the most important scientific breakthroughs ever achieved. Most importantly, the most dangerous tyrant in the world Adolf Hitler, had suddenly acquired the most awesome and potentially destructive weapon yet conceived by man.

Substantial progress continued, particularly regarding the servo-control systems and the high-capacity fuel pumps, until June 1942 when the first A-4, later to become known as the spectacular V-2, was fired but crashed after leaving its launch pad. Two months later, another A-4 was fired and, while its motor failed, the rocket was the first to exceed the speed of sound. But the third A-4 achieved an incredible height of fifty miles and fell some 119 miles distant. Equally important, when full production of the missile was ordered, the completion of a unit with its 30,000 parts had been reduced from 19,000 man-hours to 4,000. A remarkable accomplishment and a magnificent success had at last been obtained with the revolutionary arrival of the space age rocket.

The Fuehrer was ecstatic and was now sure that he would win the war. More funds, personnel and facilities were made available and production received the highest priority. Improvements and modifications were quickly developed and the range and the speed of the missiles were greatly increased. Components were sub-contracted and the final V-2, unquestionably, was the most complicated and revolutionary mechanical device yet invented. It weighed over twelve and a half tons when launched carrying 8,300 pounds of fuel and 11,000 pounds of liquid

oxygen that was consumed at a rate of 275 pounds per second. The rocket was forty-six feet long and five feet five inches wide and, after traveling a height of up to fifty miles and a distance of up to 260 miles at 3,300 mph, its accuracy was incredibly "better than 4 percent."

Since rockets were being developed by the Army, they were disdained by the Luftwaffe which had succeeded in producing its own secret weapon—the V-1. A pilotless "flying bomb" was produced which was, in fact, a small aircraft built largely of wood with a pulse-jet engine and equipped with a high-explosive warhead. The engine was a simple device developed in Germany in the 1920's based on the jet principle which is widely used on aircraft today. Back in 1934, its use had been suggested as an "aerial torpedo," but was ignored. By 1941, a stubby, short-winged pilotless aircraft driven by a pulse-jet engine and equipped with a warhead was developed as the Fieseler Fi-103. It was inexpensively built and flew between 1,000 and 7,000 feet at over 400 mph with a range up to 250 miles. It was successfully tested at Pennemunde in 1941 and immediately a controversy arose between the Luftwaffe and the Army regarding priorities for the V-1 and the V-2. Since the V-2 development was controlled by the SS and the V-1 by the Luftwaffe, there had been a bitter rivalry concerning the production of Hitler's revenge weapons. While the V-1 could be built at a cost of only ten percent of a V-2, it was slow and vulnerable to both anti-aircraft guns and enemy planes. The V-2 had the great advantage of being supersonic and there was no direct defense against it. Since Adolf Hitler had been desperate for "secret weapons" to save the war for Germany, both weapons were placed into maximum production with highly optimistic expectations.

Now time was running out against the Nazis intention to blast Britain out of the war with their new "terror weapons." In the beginning, it was Hitler who blundered away the potential of the new rocket-powered and jet-propelled weapons when he failed to comprehend their potential revolutionary impact upon warfare. And later, his refusal to provide an early priority of support within a properly managed central control of all German research and development and the spectacular accomplishments of Germany's scientific community, both essentially blundered and wasted what could have been a decisive influence towards the attainment of his goals for Germany.

Hitler's weapons of reprisal (Vergeltungswaffen) were not only a desperate effort to save the war but also to lift German morale and resistance. Fortuitously, in November 1939 an anonymous informer had notified the British that the Germans were developing large rockets at an experimental center at Pennemunde. Surprisingly, nothing was done about it. Even three years later, when an unplanned aerial photo showed some strange new circular earthworks at Pennemunde, no action was taken. Finally, after aerial photos taken in August 1943 actually showed several A-4's being readied to be launched, the British staged a 600 bomber raid on Pennemunde and heavy damage and casualties so endangered operations that the assembly of the V-2 rockets was moved to a new underground facility within the Hartz mountains near Nordhausen.

Shortly afterwards, Allied air reconnaissance discovered some sixty-three launching sites for the "buzz-bombs" along the Channel coast and by early 1944 their bombers had destroyed seventy-three of the ninety-six sites which had been located. When Rundstedt and Rommel met with Hitler in France on June 17, 1944 to tell him that the war was lost in the face of Allied superiority "in the air, at sea and on the land," Hitler boasted that his new V-1 weapon, which had been launched the day before, would make the British "willing to make peace." And when they complained about the ineffectiveness of the Luftwaffe over Normandy, Hitler countered by saying that "masses of jet fighters" would soon be ready and would drive Allied planes "from the skies." But German hopes for the "wonder weapons" were greatly reduced when most of the V-1 sites aimed at Britain were overrun as the Allied breakout from Normandy cleared much of the Channel coast. Still, by the time the Anglo-American forces were ready to push across the borders of Germany, almost 8,000 V-weapons had been fired at Britain and "military" targets.

Meanwhile, Britain's air intelligence blunders had been disastrous. Numerous reports on the enemy's testing of new weapons from 1939 on had been generally ignored. Earlier bombings of rocket facilities would have substantially set-back the missile program and well might have prevented their introduction before the war ended. In spite of knowing about the construction of launching ramps on the coast of France and many reports from the French resistance, the nature, purpose and use of the new V-1 weapons was unfortunately misinterpreted which greatly delayed discovery and postponed countermeasures. The RAF remained

unaware that more than one ground-to-ground missile was being tested at Pennemunde when a photo taken in November 1943 showed a midget aircraft with a wingspan of only twenty feet being launched. Only then was it realized that the "ski sites" with block buildings along the French coast were launching ramps for pilotless aircraft which might be armed with nuclear warheads. By then some ninety-five sites had been identified and, at last, the British concluded they had identified the "flying bomb." Understandably, the danger, numbers and effect of the new terror weapon were greatly overestimated.

Largely as the result of Allied bombing, the V-1 "flying bombs" did not become operational from their launching sites in France until after the D-Day landings at Normandy. That was sheer luck for General Dwight Eisenhower said that if the flying-bombs had been used against the staging areas six months earlier, "our invasion of Europe would have proved exceedingly difficult, perhaps impossible." Once the invasion had occurred, Montgomery's repeated failure to breakout at Caen to seize the V-1 sites had greatly rankled the Supreme Allied Command. Fortunately, the Americans had opposed any further British delay of OVERLORD and General Eisenhower resisted British pressure to postpone Operation COBRA, which lead to the American breakout in Normandy. Otherwise, Allied aircraft bombing would not have been concentrated effectively against the V-1 launching sites along the coast of France.

The first "buzz-bomb" exploded at Swanscombe, twenty miles east of London on June 13, 1944 with no casualties, but when it became publicly known that robot aircraft were bombing Britain more than a million people moved out of London within ten weeks. Since the government had done all it could to prepare the public, there was no panic, and Montgomery's invading forces were given the highest priority to overrun the launching sites along the coast of France. Actually, the aerial bombing device was little more than a new use of an old concept. As far back as 1907, a patent was granted in France for a pulse-jet engine using a low-pressure supercharger to pump a mixture of fuel into a combustion-chamber fired by a spark-plug. Between the wars the British had developed pilotless radio-controlled aircraft as targets for their warplanes. So defenses against the robot bombs were rapidly developed. When the low-flying V-1's began to arrive, they were met by cables strung from hundreds of barrage balloons and anti-aircraft guns were heavily stationed along their expected routes. Quickly the RAF

learned that the slow-flying aircraft could be overtaken and shot down or could be made to crash prematurely by tipping the wings of the "flying bombs."

After the Allies had gained a firm lodgment in Normandy, many of Germany's military leaders believed that the war would soon end. Hitler and his Nazi associates, however, believed that his major "weapons of reprisal," now ready to be deployed against the enemy, would force the British to sue for peace, the dire fate of the Third Reich would be changed, and victory would yet be won. In fact, when von Rundstedt and Rommel met with Hitler in France after the invasion on June 17, 1944 to tell him that all hope to win the war was lost, the Fuehrer boasted that his newly launched V-1 weapon would soon make the British "willing to make peace." And when they complained about the lack of Luftwaffe cover in Normandy, Hitler bragged that "masses of jet fighters" would soon drive the Allied planes "from the skies." When the author visited the headquarters of the US First Army at Spa, Belgium in September 1944, he saw and heard his first V-1 missile pass overhead. It was both frightening and disturbing while thinking that "the diabolical Germans have now begun to use robot weapons for which there is no defense!"

But even though Allied bombings had caused much damage to the V-1 sites, the modified and not easily identified installations remained largely intact. On the first day when a heavy barrage of 500 V-1's included two missiles per hour from fifty to sixty sites was ordered, only ten missiles actually got aloft, five of which crashed after take-off, one disappeared, and only four fell in Britain causing a total of fifteen casualties. But soon substantial assaults were successfully launched against Britain and, during fourteen hours beginning June 15, some 244 "doodle-bugs"(as we called them) were fired against London, fifty were aimed at Southampton, and thirty-three of the total were shot down. Next after their support of the battle in Normandy, the Allies concentrated on the V-1 launching sites. And, as Montgomery's Second Army overran the French coast following the Normandy breakout, the first of the Fuehrer's "wonder weapons" was being rapidly eliminated. Still, by the time Allied forces reached the borders of Germany in September 1944, almost 9,000 V-1 weapons had been fired at Britain, Antwerp, Liege and other targets.

While the physical damage had been great with 6,000 Britons killed and 17,000 wounded, the greatest damage of the V-1 offensive had proved to be

psychological. The new weapon had a terrorizing effect, particularly against civilian populations, and every man, woman and child seemed to be vulnerable. The "putt-putt" noise made by the approaching flying bombs kept the general populace awake and apprehensive both day and night. The widespread physical evidence of damage, the terrible sound of anti-aircraft guns, and the never-ending unrelentless attack of the missiles created a great psychological deterioration among the British people. But, fortunately, by July the defensive tactics had improved so greatly that over the first five weeks of the attacks sixty percent of the weapons observed were being destroyed. Although the Germans produced 25,000 V-1's for the year of 1944 and 9,800 were turned out in 1945, out of 9,251 "buzz bombs" launched against England 4,261 were destroyed, some 2,650 went astray, and only 2,340 managed to get pass the heavy defense of aircraft, balloons and guns to reach the London area. Hitler was soon forced to realize that Britain's countermeasures had defeated the use of his first wonder weapon. Angrily, he ordered his major weapon of vengeance, the V-2 to be unleashed to destroy an enemy who continued to refuse to join his "crusade" against the hated Bolsheviks.

The British also believed that the V-1 campaign had been defeated and that the rocket threat to Britain had been overcome. The fact was, however, that the Nazis had just completed preparations to begin their "decisive" V-2 offensive. Since they had become able to move the not easily detected launching platforms anywhere within a 200 mile range of London to avoid being bombed, the advance of the Allies across France, Belgium and into the Lowlands had not removed the danger of Hitler's most threatening weapon which could potentially be equipped with nuclear warheads. Thus, the terrible times of terror for the British people continued..

On September 8, 1944 the first V-2's had been fired from the Rhineland directed at Paris, and from The Hague to Chiswick and Epping with three persons killed and ten injured. Several days later, fourteen rocket bombs were launched from several batteries whose locations were unknown. Then, suddenly, the British people found it necessary to defend themselves against the most terrifying weapon of the European War—the super-sonic V-2 rocket. But how could a defense be possible against missiles which could neither be seen nor heard until they exploded? Furthermore, the Germans attempted to by-pass V-1

countermeasures by launching flying bombs from Heinkel-111 aircraft. But when fifteen planes launched nine V-1's, two were brought down over the Channel by ships, fighters shot down three, two wandered off harmlessly, and only two fell in the London area. At the same time, thirty-five V-2's were fired at London, two fell into the sea, six came down at Essex, two in Sussex, and one in the Thames Estuary, but twenty-seven reached the city. Eventually, when Antwerp became the major supply port for the Allies, it became the major target for both V-1's and V-2's, and on August 28 alone, ninety-seven missiles were launched against Allied targets. By September 25, V-2's were being launched from Friesland, Germany with up to forty-three missiles being fired by one battery in one day, and after the Allied airborne attack failed at Arnhem, the V-2 batteries returned to Holland.

There simply was no defense to the V-2 rockets other than to attempt to identify launching locations which could be bombed by Allied aircraft. Surprisingly, damage by the V-2's turned out to be less than that of the V-1, whose explosive force traveled outwardly, while the V-2 with such great speed and force, buried itself deeply into the earth and exploded vertically which limited the damage. And psychologically, the V-2 was less harmful than the flying bomb since it was so fast it was not heard until it exploded, thus only persons in the immediate vicinity became aware of it. By the middle of December 1944, an average of only four rockets per day were reaching Britain and on January 14, 1945, the last of 1,200 air-launched flying bombs were released. In spite of 1,143 Allied bombing sorties against probable launching sites during January and February, up to ten V-2's per day had continued to strike England. In March 1945 after firing its last V-2, the final battery at The Hague withdrew to Germany. From the previous September 1944, 1,403 V-2 rockets had been launched by batteries in Holland of which 517 landed in the London area, 537 ended up in other parts of Britain, 61 fell in the sea, and 288 had malfunctioned. Total casualties included 2,754 civilians killed and 6,523 wounded. Basil Collier concluded that Hitler's wonder weapons were a failure since they proved to be nothing more than a new form of artillery which did not succeed in improving the range and the destructive capability of existing aircraft.

Historian Charles B. MacDonald claims that the V-2 as a "harbinger of future weaponry had little effect on the war...All the V weapons the Germans expended

lacked the impact of one heavy bombing raid." In fact, Hitler's terror rocket program turned out to be little more than another great blunder. If he had invested the same funds and skills into aircraft improvement and production, he would likely have won the Battle of Britain which would have vastly changed the consequences of the war's ending. As it was, the general damage caused by the rockets was much less than expected and their effect had been more psychological than military. Technically, they proved to be little more than another type of long-range artillery which failed to increase the existing range of conventional aircraft. Their accuracy was not reliable and even had they been introduced into the war earlier, their use would not have been decisive. However, a great and real fear arose from the possibility that the Germans might have had atomic bombs to be carried by the rockets which would have been catastrophic.

The final figures on the V-2 assault which had begun in September 1944 showed that a total of about 5,000 missiles were fired of which 1,115 had come down in Britain, 1,341 at Antwerp, ninety-eight in Liege, sixty-five at Brussels, fifteen in Paris, eleven at the Remagen bridge, and five in Luxembourg. In the last months of the war, the underground factory at Nordhausen, using labor from the nearby concentration camp, was producing about 900 missiles per month. A total of about 10,000 V-2 missiles had been turned out and 1,800 were found to be stockpiled, leaving some 4,200 unaccounted for. While the scientific progress they represented entitled them to being considered as "wonder weapons," their results were a far cry from being the "miracle weapons" which could have altered the outcome of the war. Clearly, if the devastating Allied strategic bombing could not force Germany to surrender, and since the Germans did not have atomic warheads, it was totally unrealistic for Adolf Hitler, or anyone else, to suggest that a missile bombardment could force Britain to make peace with Germany.

However, the remarkable success of the development of the V-2 rocket led to the testing and production of a number of other innovative rockets including the "Waterfall" (Wasserfall) project, which was somewhat similar to the V-2, and involved a radio-controlled supersonic guided anti-aircraft missile designed to destroy aircraft flying at 65,000 feet at speeds of 550 mph as far as thirty miles distance. The missile was shorter than the V-2 with four stubby wings and its use to defend German cities of 100,000 or more people would have required 200

batteries and a production of 5,000 missiles per month. Testing was not completed in 1945, and there is no evidence that they were ever fired against Allied aircraft. Soon the small "Typhoon" (Taifun) rocket followed which was only six feet in length with a speed of 2,800 mph. In January 1945, 10,000 of the Typhoon missiles were ordered for 400 batteries each with twelve projectors to be in operation by September. Each projector mounted thirty rockets on a converted 88-mm gun carriage. The missile weighed forty-six pounds with a ceiling of nine miles and cost only twenty-five marks each. But only 600 had been produced by war's end. In rapid order, the A-6 rocket was developed and the A-7 was fitted with wings for a glide path to increase its range. Lastly, the A-9/A-10 was a winged two-stage adaptation of the A-4 which doubled the size of the V-2 rocket with a booster which separated at a height of 110 miles. After rising to a height of 200 miles, it descended to a glide path to its target some 3,000 miles away. It was specifically designed to strike the United States and, fortunately, only its prototype had been completed when hostilities ceased.

Other missiles that were developed but never placed into service before the end of hostilities included the Forester's Probe (Forstersonde) as a rocket-boosted anti-tank bomb to be dropped from aircraft. Anti-ship missiles were developed equipped with underwater propulsion and a television-aided guidance device. Various companies formed new research projects which led to the development of numerous possibilities for anti-aircraft rocket weapons to be fired both from the ground and from aircraft. And the "Butterfly" (Schmetterling) was developed by BMW in 1941 as a radio-controlled subsonic glider rocket bomb with wings and cruciform tail, but the offensive-minded Luftwaffe turned it down as a defensive weapon. In 1943 it was resurrected but it was too late to be used against the enemy. Some have called it "the most advanced German missile of the war." A Glide (Gleit) Torpedo as an air-to-ground missile was begun in 1942 and another air-to-air missile was produced by Henschel to be "rail-launched" from a Dornier 217 or a Fw-190. One of the most promising of the missile weapons called the "Viper" (Natter) was a single-seat mid-wing monoplane proposed in August 1944 to be a piloted, rocket-propelled interceptor aircraft. Initially, it was launched after being towed by a Heinkel He-111, but in later tests it was fired vertically from a ramp and flew straight up to its target guided and automatically controlled by ground-to-air radar. The Natter was armed with two sets of 73-mm

anti-aircraft rockets, but after only thirty aircraft had been produced, further testing was suspended by the approach of the Allies.

The "Rhinedaughter" (Rheintochter) was a large subsonic anti-aircraft rocket weighing 3,450lbs that was fired from a ramp based on the carriage of a converted 88-mm Flak weapon. The radio-controlled device used an optical tracking system aided by attached flares and its 330lb warhead was fitted with an acoustic proximity fuse. Testing began in August 1943 and a third model was launched from a permanent pit ramp, but by early 1945 only six had been fired. The "Rhine Messenger" (Rheinbote) was developed as a long-range surface-to-surface missile capable of firing a 40 kilogram high explosive load a distance of 160 kilometers. It evolved as a four-stage rocket missile launched from a simple trailer and 220 were launched against Antwerp in 1945 with little damage by its light warhead. Another missile with great potential was the Messerschmitt "Enzian" based on an unmanned "Komet" rocket fighter. Thirty-eight were flight-tested in late 1944 but none reached service. Other missiles, such as the F-25 (Fuerlilie), the F-55, the BV-143, and the BV-246 had promise, but never reached production.

The first missile ever launched from a submarine was successfully fired in 1942, and an air-to-ground rocket labeled "Tank Lightning" (Panzerblitz) was developed in 1945 to be launched by an aircraft to knockout tanks, but failed to get into production before the German collapse. The "Pipebowl" (Pfeifenkopf) used a television visual guidance system which relayed images of the target in contrast to its background. Another device, also using a similar guidance system, was first tested in late 1944 as an air-to-ground missile against tanks, but there is no record of its use. Looking much like a recoilless artillery piece, the "Dolly" (Pupchen) fired a rocket projectile and was developed as a "light" anti-tank weapon. The Me-262 jet fighters carried the innovative R4M air-to-air rocket made of a simple steel tube with spring-out fins powered by a solid propellant rocket motor armed with either normal high-explosive or hollow charge warheads. But like many other projects, its high potential was bungled by Adolf Hitler's disastrous policies regarding the development and application of Germany's remarkable scientific accomplishments.

The X-4 air-to air missile was first successfully flown in September 1944. The weapon was 6ft-6in long with a 2ft-6in wing span, gyro-stabilized and wire-guided, weighed 132 pounds and had a speed of 550 mph with a range of 3,000

yards. By early 1945, 1,000 X-4 rockets had been produced, but while waiting for the engines to be attached, the factory was heavily bombed and the project was abandoned. The X-7 evolved as an anti-tank missile weighing 22 pounds with a range of 1100 yards and could penetrate 200mm of armor, yet none were found intact after the war.

The rapid disruption and destruction by Allied bombing forced the Germans to frantically develop the most effective defensive countermeasures possible. New anti-aircraft weapons were urgently conceived which included the "Flyer's Fist" (Fliegerfaust) as a hand-held nine-barrel 20mm rocket launcher for use against low-flying aircraft, but by 1945 there had been no substantial production. Another device, the "Swiss Wind" (Foen) was a multiple anti-aircraft trailer-mounted rocket launcher designed to be fired in large numbers to create barrages against low-flying bombers with few being used by war's end. A rocket-boosted glide bomb (Hs-293) developed by Henschel was used against shipping, but its radio-controlled guidance was successfully jammed by the enemy. Numerous other innovations were introduced including the use of wire-control and delta-wing aircraft, air-to-air missiles, and television guidance systems. The "Mistletoe" (Mistel) was a unique glide bomb which was hooked beneath a fighter and, controlled by the fighter pilot, it replaced a towing system for improved accuracy. In 1943 a bomber was filled with explosives and attached to a fighter which, after diving, released the bomber which glided towards the enemies' capital ships, but produced only disappointing results. In 1944 a simple and inexpensive anti-aircraft rocket named "Sea Mew" (Mowe) was tested to protect ships against low-flying aircraft, but was abandoned before production.

By the last year of the war the incessant Allied bombing of Germany caused a desperate need for new and faster fighters and bombers capable of carrying heavier bomb-loads. Rumors circulated that there was a secret aircraft, the Heinkel He-177, capable of carrying bombloads of 17,500lbs, but it turned out to be a failure. Also, there was a He-274 with a range of 1,875 miles, but production was not reached before the war was over. Western observers claimed there was a German tendency towards "faddishness" which doomed many potentially powerful new weapons. And, they added, such weapons would have made a great difference in the German defense against Allied strategic bombing and would have given the Germans a much greater ability to inflict bomb damage upon their enemies.

Numerous other rocket projects had been developed to meet the need for new and better aerial weapons and German scientific achievements particularly excelled in the field of aero-dynamics. In fact, they were so much more advanced in aeronautics than the Allies that most of their accomplishments were only discovered at the war's end. The variety of radically different aircraft they invented, largely inspired by desperate defensive needs, was astounding. The critical urgency had demanded the creation of feasible countermeasures which could be produced quickly and inexpensively to effectively destroy Allied fighters and bombers before they could reach their targets. Author Ian Hogg was convinced that it was the lack of control of the number of projects "which staggers the imagination," that self-defeated Hitler's determination to capitalize on German technology to acquire the "superiority in armaments" to win the war. As it was, the fundamental blunder in the strategic planning of military contingencies, and the lack of coordination and priority of a proliferation of projects, that enabled the enemy to bring the war to an end before many of the most effective weapons became available. Undoubtedly, had such devices entered service by 1943, the course of the war would have been substantially, and perhaps fatally, changed for the Allies. The two years that were lost, when expectations of a quick end to the "lightning war" brought most scientific endeavor to a halt, could never be regained. It was, indeed, one of Hitler's greatest blunders of World War II.

The world's first workable jet engine had been patented in England in 1930. By 1937, the Walter rocket engine was produced in Germany and two years later a Heinkel He-178 made the first successful flight by an aircraft powered by a rocket engine. Inconceivably, further work on a rocket-powered aircraft was abandoned by the scientific moratorium which followed the Fuehrer's quick victory over Poland. But two years later, the short-stubby liquid-fueled Messerschmitt 163B (Komet) rocket fighter was tested, successfully flew at almost 600 mph, and had climbed 10,000 feet per minute. Fitted with a disposable landing gear, after exhausting its fuel in a seven minute flight, it glided back to earth. By 1944, it was sent up against the enemy, but managed to bring down only a few Allied planes. The Arado 234 became the world's first operational jet bomber, saw only limited service in late 1944, and it was the last German aircraft to fly over Britain in April 1945. However, regardless of how many new and powerful aircraft Germany's scientists could produce, by the end of 1944 they

generally became useless due to the lack of fuel. As a result of Allied strategic bombing, by January 1945 Germany's entire military fuel reserves had been reduced to a level of 30 percent.

Among other experimental projects which greatly influenced aircraft with radical changes after the war included the Arado 234C fighter with 4 jet engines that obtained a speed of 670 mph and an altitude of 26,000 feet. Revolutionary glider concepts that were tested as far back as 1932 inspired the V1 and V2 versions of the Horten H-IX "flying-wing" fighter powered by two Juno jet engines designed to attain 720 mph at 20,000 feet, but the test models were destroyed to prevent Allied capture. When Hitler ordered development of a "miracle fighter" against Allied bombers, the Heinkel-162 (Volksjager) was first used against the enemy in 1945. Looking somewhat like a V-1, it was a single-engined jet fighter and reached 490 mph and climbed 4,230 feet per minute. While almost a hundred were built, the secret plane was largely grounded by the lack of fuel. Even a composite aircraft was constructed (Junkers Ju-287) which consisted of the fuselage of a He-177, the rudder of a Ju-88, and the landing gear of a shot-down B-24 Liberator. However, Germany's most innovative aircraft was the Jaeger P-13 that was designed as a supersonic all-wing airship with a potential speed of 1,500 mph. Fortunately for the Allies, it never got into the air before hostilities ceased.

Oddly enough the Me-262 jet fighter, the most spectacular aircraft of the war with its vast potential as a powerful defensive and offensive weapon against the Allied air forces, became involved in another great blunder by Hitler. It could have been one of the Fuehrer's most formidable "miracle weapons," and most likely would have won the skies of Europe as Hitler and Goering intended. However, when it was first demonstrated to Adolf Hitler in 1943, as the best if not the first jet produced by Germany, the Fuehrer immediately ordered its production as a bomber instead of a fighter in the belief it would miraculously reverse his defeat in the Soviet Union. As German fighter ace Adolf Galland would say, they believed that "Terror could only be smashed by counterterror." But due to the high speed and the limited load of the Me-262, it proved to be ineffective as a bomber. Undoubtedly Hitler's action, as one historian put it, "probably prevented the Allies from losing air supremacy over Europe." At the end of 1944 Hitler realized his mistake and ordered the conversion of the Me-262 back from bomber to fighter. But, by the time 1,000 of the war's fastest and

most powerful fighter aircraft could be produced and Germany's jet fighter forces could be formed, it was too late.

The fact was that Allied aircraft were no match for the German jets which claimed that 400 British and American planes, including 300 four-engine bombers, were shot down in the short time they flew before the end of the war. Earlier in the war Allied fighters would have been unable to prevent the German jets from shooting down most of the Allied bombers. But by late 1944, European skies were filled with Allied planes which managed to catch the jets at slower speeds before takeoffs and landings, and jet factories, fuel plants and airport runways were heavily bombed. While Hitler's meddling in the production of jet fighters had apparently saved the day for the Allies in the air, Allied planes had so successfully bombed the refineries which produced jet fuel, as well as the special long runways they required for take-offs, that few jets ever got into the air and most of them were destroyed on the ground.

The Fuehrer had promised his generals that a certain victory for Germany would be revived when his "masses of jet fighters" would drive the Allies out of the skies. And Hermann Goering stated at the war's end that had Germany been able to get its jets into the air four or five months earlier, they would have won the war. He pointed out that the factory at Kahla could produce up to 1,200 Me-262s per month and the Reichsmarshal believed that 5,000 or more aircraft would have changed the outcome. While that may be questionable, surely had the Me-262s been available earlier, and as fighters rather than as bombers, the end of the war would have been attained with much greater difficulty.

Other secret and amazing aircraft for their time included the Focke-Wulf TA-135 which was somewhat like the V-1; the FW-03 10225 as a long-range bomber capable of carrying 6,000 pounds of bombs to the United States; the "Mistel" which could be launched by a mother aircraft (200 were produced but proved to be ineffective against the enemy); and a rocket-powered aircraft DFS-228 Mk 1 which reached 60,000ft and 560mph in level flight. A flying-wing, the H-2, was flown as early as 1934 and before the war's end the Mark 8 model, intended to have a range of 4,500mi at 200mph at 10,000ft, was destroyed to prevent Allied capture. Numerous other experimental models were developed from revolutionary flying-wings to small rocket-powered interceptors, any one of which would have had some influence upon the war, had there been more time for research and development.

Many more new weapons were developed from the advances made in rocketry which greatly increased Germany's war-making capabilities. The famous hand-held Panzerfaust anti-tank rocket launcher, based on the American "Bazooka," fired a hollow charge missile which was highly effective against tank armor as well as fortifications. The well-known Nebelwerfer-41, a 6-barreled 150-cm multi-rocket launcher, was the most effective and sophisticated rocket artillery weapon of the war and was greatly feared by Germany's enemies. It was wheeled and towed by a truck and was fired electrically at a rate of six rounds every 90 seconds with a 30 degree traverse and a range of 7,723 yards. Guided-bombs were introduced such as the Hs-293 glider bomb which was a miniature plane with a 1,100lb warhead that became the world's first guided missile in 1943. Another glide bomb was called the "Fritz-X" that was radio-controlled with a 3,300lb warhead capable of piercing heavier armor, and two missiles were successfully launched from Dornier-111 aircraft in the world's first guided missile attack that sank two Royal Navy vessels. Even more spectacularly, the super-gun Hochdruckpumpe (HDP) used a long sectional pipe with pairs of side barrels which automatically ejected explosive missiles in sequence at 4,500 feet per second. Had not an installation of five of the super-guns at Calais been destroyed by Allied bombing, London would have been subjected to another great disaster. Lastly, rocket-powered torpedoes were also developed but never proved to be very successful.

Hitler's "secret weapons" inventory also involved serious efforts to develop new and more deadly poison gases for use against Germany's enemies in World War II. At war's end, even several nerve gases were found to be stockpiled at the Raubhammer proving grounds. While the Germans had been the first to introduce the use of poison gas in warfare during World War I, undoubtedly the fear of certain retaliation prevented its use by the mad Fuehrer in World War II. Still the threat remained throughout the war as another possible "terror weapon," and when rumors circulated that gas might be used, SHAEF actually alerted American air commanders to plan for the contingency of flying gas bombs to Europe. Shortly after the invasion at Omaha Beach, the American invaders were horrified and paralyzed by at least two official "gas alerts." In fact, when the author was occupying a foxhole on the bluff above Omaha Beach shortly after D-Day, he found an official "gas alarm" to have been the most frightening

experience of the war. While his blood had turned to ice, he slightly lifted his gas mask to smell for gas and thought, "those damn Boche have a gas which can't be detected," and looked to see if his hands were blistered. Fortunately, it was a false alarm. The second false alert occurred when German prisoners were temporarily burying dead American soldiers and put on gas masks because of the smell. Then a soldier passing by in a Jeep saw them and immediately began to rush about shouting "Gas! Gas!" Under the threat of a court-martial, there were no more false alerts! Later there were other rumors circulated regarding such secret weapons as the possibility of secret "rays" for paralyzing the engines of Allied bombers, and that a "freezing bomb" was being perfected by the Germans.

It was not until after the war that Allied representatives discovered that the number of "secret weapons" under development by German scientists had been truly incredible. No doubt Hitler's blunders in the management of Germany's scientific possibilities resulted in what Barrie Pitt calls "The war of lost opportunities." Many of the weapons, in various stages of development, were revolutionary as well as practical, and others were described as being "bizarre," such as killer sound rays and infra-red scopes for detecting the enemy in the dark. There was a "sun-gun" and an artificial vortex-gun which created a whirlwind to bring down aircraft. Also, there was a "sound cannon" that created a killer shock-wave, an automatic meteorological station, rocket-powered torpedoes, dummy submarines loaded with explosives for ramming, and a seaplane V-1 for use as a floating torpedo. But some of the so-called "secret weapons" also served solely propaganda purposes. There were reported threats of "flying saucers," endothermic "cold" bombs, cable bombs suspended from balloons or parachutes against aircraft, and other strange and weird devices.

Again, ironically, had there been more time, more support and centralized management of Germany's scientific capabilities, particularly regarding atomic fusion, rocket-powered missiles and jet-powered aircraft, Adolf Hitler's threat that his "secret weapons" would turn defeat into victory could have become a reality. Without question, had the war lasted longer the development of "secret weapons" by the Germans would have brought forth new technology developments in many areas which might well have exceeded the technical achievements of the Allies, and could have critically influenced a victory or defeat. And had

Hitler obtained the atom bomb before the US, there is absolutely no doubt but that he would have used it against Russia and the United States!

Perhaps the greatest benefit of Hitler's "secret weapons" was that they boosted the morale of the German people under the most awesome consequences to which any nation has ever been subjected. Without the hope that their Fuehrer's "wonder weapons" would reverse their fate, Germany would surely have collapsed earlier. And it is obvious that the first rocket-powered missiles and the first jet-powered military aircraft alone were so revolutionary and potentially powerful that it would have been easy to believe that they might bring about a victory out of defeat. In fact, even today, it is frightening to contemplate about what would have happened if Adolf Hitler had obtained atomic warheads for his supersonic missiles. Does anyone doubt that he would have used them to conquer and exterminate much of civilized society? It is fortunate for the world, indeed, that the war was brought to an end before the ultimate destructive weapon became available to the brutally aggressive Nazis of Germany.

In the final months of the war the Western Allies "scrambled frantically" to gain control of the German rocket technology before the Soviets could do so. Many of the top scientists, including the leading rocket pioneer Werner von Braun, were taken into custody by the United States, and they continued their important and successful work at the American space center with spectacular results. The Soviets also obtained German scientists and technology which, in addition to the treacherous espionage of American and British spies, enabled them to embarrass the United States by launching the first "Sputnik" satellite in 1957 and to challenge the Americans in the space race. Thus it was the V-2 which led the breakthrough into outer space and would eventually carry man to the moon. However, the initially terrorizing V-1's were quickly forgotten as being a pilotless aircraft that produced little technical advancement.

The actual "wonder" of Hitler's weapons prevails to this day, but as "vengeance" weapons they failed to be important factors in the war largely due to the Fuehrer's blunders. He, in fact, destroyed Germany's atomic energy program by failing to see the potential of the atom bomb for producing an awesome new power of destruction which might have won the war for Germany and made it possible to have imposed his evil will upon much of mankind. He ignored the work of the German physicists in their amazing development of new war-making

technology, imposed time limitations which eliminated the development of numerous projects which might have won the war for Germany, and once he had been forced to recognize the almost unlimited potential of many of the new weapons, he continued to interfere with their development until it was too late for his "secret weapons" to turn defeat into victory in the most destructive war in human history.

And in perhaps the most ironic development of the war, it was the evil and hate of the Nazis themselves which led to their own destruction when Adolf Hitler forced Germany's Jewish scientists out of the country who were among those that made the all-powerful atomic bomb available to the ultimate enemy of the Third Reich!

Chapter 16

The Sacrifice of the Forsaken

Long before World War II anti-Semitic discrimination was widespread throughout Europe and probably nowhere more intensely than in Vienna. The young vagrant and resentful Adolf Hitler spent what he called "the saddest period of my life" in the Austrian capital during the years between 1909 and 1913. At a time of great unrest arising from social revolt and racial struggle, the fanatic young nationalist believed the Empire was rapidly becoming a "foul morass." Hitler's boyhood friend August Kubizek said that the youthful "idealist" was already an anti-Semitist when he came to Vienna. There were more than 200,000 Jews among Vienna's two million people, and after having read all the anti-Semitic literature he could find, Hitler said, "Gradually, I began to hate them." It was a hate that became so possessive and compulsive that it ultimately became the source of the most horrible incidence of violence and cruelty of man towards man in all recorded history—the Holocaust. Then, as increasing information about the extermination of the Jews became known, people throughout the world were so repulsed by the barbarous savagery of the Nazis, which had necessarily involved the widespread knowledge, participation, sympathy and indifference of so many of the German people themselves, that they felt that only the total defeat of Germany and the permanent isolation of the German people could be acceptable by a civilized society.

Adolf Hitler's policy of persecution and elimination of the Jews was one of his greatest possible blunders to the fulfillment of his Nazi dream of a "Thousand-year-old Reich." Historian Edwin P. Hoyt contends that by intentionally making anti-Semitism the means for his political takeover, Hitler turned the world against himself and Germany, and forced the Germans to fight the world "to conquer or be conquered." Hoyt also says that Hitler's anti-Semitism was his

greatest mistake causing ultimate failure and defeat and led him to believe that his eighty million Germans could overcome two hundred million Soviets. Unquestionably, it was an attitude that determined the eventual destruction of Germany itself. More than anything, Hitler's anti-Semitism inflamed the mass emotional hate and support of the German people which enabled Hitler to seize power for his brutal Nazi regime. His anti-Semitism also revealed the true nature of Hitler's goals, turned world opinion against the Nazis, forever convicted the German people with the most barbarous acts in human history, and greatly influenced the western Allies to seek the total destruction of Nazi Germany.

But many Germans were also appalled over the persecution and treatment of the Jews, but rather than risk physical harm and public condemnation, they chose not to intervene. What opposition there was to Hitler was directed principally upon ending the war, so that the terrible fate of the Jews proceeded without effective organized resistance in the absence of any substantial help from abroad. Thus the Nazi persecution and mass suffering and slaughter of millions of innocent men, women and children became the most inhuman and barbarous chapter in history. While the people of Germany must eternally bear the basic responsibility for the Holocaust, generally the peoples of the world, and particularly the United States under the leadership of Franklin D. Roosevelt, not only failed to recognize the tragedy, but actually refused to undertake any substantial effort to alleviate the helpless plight of the victims of Nazi genocide. While American leaders contended that the necessity for concentrating on winning the war prohibited doing more to help the plight of the Jews, clearly they had both the influence and the resources to have done much more to alleviate, if not prevent, such a horrific tragedy by providing refuge, at least temporarily, which could have saved the lives of hundreds of thousands of Jews. Instead, the fate of the Jews of Europe was largely ignored while six million of them were brutally murdered in Nazi concentration camps. The abandonment of the Jews was clearly the most unforgivable blunder of World War II.

As far back as medieval times the different and unassimilated culture of many Jews, and the centuries-old attitude of Christians over the crucification of Christ, had resulted in widespread anti-Semitism and the mass expulsion of Jews from almost every country in Europe. They were often confined to either ghettos or in special regions where expulsion and oppression, accompanied by outbursts of

violence, commonly occurred. In the early 1900's, however, there was a decided improvement towards "emancipation" in Western Europe with Jews taking active roles in all major aspects of society including public office and economic and social affairs. Jews had been in Germany since Roman times and had been citizens of Germany for more than a thousand years. Although strong antagonisms, if not prejudice, continued particularly inspired by German nationalism, the Jews were more assimilated in Germany than anywhere else in Europe. And under the Weimar Republic, every German citizen of Jewish origin received the full rights of equality and protection of the law for the first time in German history. Most of them occupied influential positions, made important contributions to society, and successful and wealthy Jews were generally accepted by the aristocracy. They were particularly successful and well-regarded as professors, lawyers, bankers, physicians, scientists, authors, and musicians. Even Jewish and non-Jewish laborers worked together to improve German working conditions.

In Poland and Russia, however, conditions were completely different where racial violence and murderous "pograms" often took place. Particularly in densely-populated areas of Russia with low living standards, the church and state, as well as the people, discriminated against the Jews who were traditionally isolated and unassimilated. Poland had the largest Jewish population in Europe with three million Jews who had come mainly from Russia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and from Germany. There were 600,000 Jews in Hungary, slightly less than 500,000 in Rumania, 350,000 in Czechoslovakia, 250,000 in France with smaller numbers in other European countries. Before the war there were approximately 490,000 Jews in Germany. The number of Jews who were citizens of Germany was never greater than one percent of the total population. In fact, Germany's constitution of 1871 had been followed by sixty-four years of "nominal equality" in racial relations. Many Jews were able to overcome most of their obstacles and substantial numbers had been able to become generally assimilated into just about all aspects of German life. Over eighty percent of German Jews were born in Germany and by 1933, forty-four percent of all Jews in Germany were married to non-Jews. Many Jews, through conviction or for better relations with non-Jews, had become completely integrated by renouncing their faith and traditions through intermarriage or by religious conversion. Author Sarah Gordon reveals that "Jews in Germany between 1870 and 1933

did not suffer from a lack of hope for their future." But, largely as a result of dislocations following World War I, by 1933 the number of foreign Jews in Germany had greatly increased bringing with them their traditional cultures which led them to congregate and to be segregated. Mostly from Poland and Russia, the large numbers and the higher visibility of the Eastern Jews, increased local economic and political tensions, divisions within the Jewish communities resulted, and greater resentments arose among Jews, as well as among non-Jews.

The Jews of Germany, however, rose to an outstanding presence in business and commerce largely by their emphasis on high educational standards and their dedicated industriousness. They were principally concentrated in the major cities and, with one-third of all Jews in Berlin and two-thirds in Prussia, their presence was greatly magnified beyond their national numbers. Since many avenues of opportunity were closed to them, they became "overrepresented" in retailing, banking, public and private service, and a higher percentage of Jews were self-employed than were non-Jews. With a "high profile" in such fields as corporate affairs, the stock market, insurance, academia, and the professions, they held twenty-five percent of all retail trade positions and, in some major segments of the wholesale trade, their predominance exceeded fifty percent.

Jewish people also widely participated in the cultural and social affairs of Germany and a number of them became influential and well-known political figures in national affairs. Generally, it was apparent that percentage-wise they were more active and influential in the national economy than any other segment of the German population and, after World War I, they had taken leading roles in the establishment of the democratic Weimar Republic. Such positions, at a time of extreme economic and political crisis, caused them to be highly visible as major targets of growing resentment among the general population, the majority of whom remained supporters of the monarchy. The up-front presence of the German Jews, and the "strange" ways and appearance of the foreign Jews, had greatly increased anti-Semitism in pre-war Germany. When the economic and political turmoil of the 30's occurred, the Nazi Fuhrer used the Jews as the scapegoat for Germany's loss of World War I, for the "stab-in-the-back diktat" of the Versailles Treaty, for their intellectual and political support of Soviet Bolshevism, for the failures of the Weimar Republic, and for the general state of political, social, and economic chaos in the Fatherland.

In 1920 Adolf Hitler had helped produce the National Socialist Workers Party (NAZI) program which provided that only persons of German blood were to be citizens of the State, that "No Jew, therefore, may be a member of the Nation," and that all Jews entering Germany after 1914 should be forced to leave. In his first speeches, Hitler demanded that the Jews be removed from Germany, and in his book *Mein Kampf* published in 1925, he pledged to eliminate the destruction of "Aryan" life by international Jewry. Little attention, however, was at first given to the "ravings of a street-rabble," but as post-World War I conditions got worse, and the Jews were increasingly blamed for all of German's problems, anti-Semitism and anti-Communism became the emotional basis for the violent activities of the brutal Nazis thugs. Then, as Hitler stepped up his hate-mongering attacks against the "wealth" and "conspiracy" of the Jews, his Stormtroopers waged all-out street warfare to rid Germany of its Jews, Socialists, and Communists.

The prominence of anti-Semitism in Germany was also stimulated by the Nazi promotion of the traditional "volkisch" ideology along with the creation of the popular myth of the "Nordic" superiority of the races, the total control of the media and its manipulation of emotional nationalism, and Germany's history as a conservative imperial power. Some of the smaller political parties had long and consistently championed anti-Semitism, and the Conservatives and the Communists resorted to anti-Semitism when needed to gain basic support on public issues. By 1932 the Social Democratic Party (SDP) had gained the support of the majority of the Jews in Germany. Several highly visible and vocal Jewish politicians and intellectuals represented strong Socialist views and many Zionists were Communists. Jews were often said to be "up-front" on political and social issues for change, and non-Jews generally believed that the majority of them were "socialist, internationalist and revolutionary" which had much to do with the popular charge that the Jews were "enemies of the state."

But there were also strong and important influences for the moderation of racial relations from conservative circles, such as Catholic humanitarians, as well as from liberal Socialists. In any event, Jews in Germany were treated better than the Jews in Poland, Russia, Austro-Hungary, and even France and Scandinavia. Surprisingly, some Jews in Germany even supported Adolf Hitler. There was even an organization for Jewish supporters of the National Socialists called the

"German Vanguard," and the Association of German National Jews actually solicited support from the Nazi party. Obviously, most German Jews had no idea what lay ahead or they chose to disbelieve Adolf Hitler's ravings of hate against them. In any case, few of them believed that the anti-Semitism of the people of Germany would turn into such hate and violence, and certainly not to the extent that mass killings of millions of innocent men, women and children would be perpetrated under the auspices of the German government itself!

Meanwhile, substantially boosted by their anti-Semitic propaganda, the Nazis gained six million votes in the election of September 1930, and became the second-largest party in Germany having increased their seats in the Reichstag from 12 to 107. With greatly increased public support, the assaults against the Jews were increased and during 1931 more than fifty synagogues were desecrated and thousands of Jewish tombstones were defiled. By July 1932, the Nazis had increased their strength to 230 Reichstag seats, but in November 1932 they lost thirty-four seats leading many persons to conclude that the Nazi were finished. Soon, however, they rallied and became the largest party in the government and, when the Communists refused to cooperate with the Socialists against the Nazis, in the absence of effective opposition Hitler was named Chancellor. At last, the Nazi tyrant had become Head of State of the Third Reich and finally, after years of violent hate and widespread brutality, he controlled the power to fulfill his threat to destroy the Jews of Germany.

Immediately after taking over the Third Reich, Hitler renewed his assault against the Jews using all the resources of the national government. As Chancellor he was now reinforced by the full power of the State with his charges that the Jews were responsible for the political and economic problems of the German people. They were blamed for everything that was wrong in Germany, and anything that was not favorable to Nazi goals, as well as any form of opposition, was represented as being either Jewish or under Jewish influence, and was subject to the physical persecution of its advocates or supporters. Anyone who opposed Hitler was branded a Jew or a "stooge of the Jews," and anti-Semitism was used to justify all forms of violence used by the Nazis against the Communists, trade unions and democratic political parties. Gerhard Schoenberner observed that "The wild terror that anticipated the law was followed by laws that legitimized the terror."

The new Nazi Chancellor quickly placed into effect a National Emergency Decree which established his dictatorship and concentrated all the power of the German government behind his war against the Jews. It legally enabled his stormtroopers to shut down all activities by the Communist Party, as well as all other non-Nazi political organizations. Furthermore, the Gestapo was made the secret police of the State and, upon its own authority, could arrest, interrogate and imprison anyone without due process of law. Thus the "police state" was legalized to pursue total war against the Jews, as well as all other opponents of the Nazi regime. Soon throughout Germany, Communists, Jews and Socialists were being physically assaulted, jailed and killed by stormtroopers as enemies of the State, and the first concentration camp was opened at Dachau. Boycotts were organized against Jewish merchants and Jewish symbols and the word "Jude" was painted on their shops. Jews were dismissed from all government positions and they were banned as teachers, actors and musicians. And, in order to terrorize all who opposed them, the Nazis opened additional concentration camps at Esterwegen and Sachsenhausen where political opponents, ministers and priests, Jews, Communists, and homosexuals were jailed and abused.

Soon Jews were forced out of the universities and other positions of influence and many outstanding Jewish personalities were forced to flee from the country. In May 1933 at Berlin, the Nazis staged a massive burning of books they considered to be degenerate. Stormtroopers rampaged through the streets attacking and killing Jews while Jews throughout Germany were subjected to economic oppression and physical and mental intimidation and abuse. Many communities proudly served notice that they were "Jew-free" and public places displayed signs saying "Jews not wanted." Many Jews committed suicide. Thousands were forced to leave the country leaving all their possessions, friends, and in many instances, members of their families behind. More than five thousand people left for Palestine. But most of Germany's Jews were either unable to leave Germany or feared to change an established and known life for the risks and uncertainties of a new and strange future elsewhere, nor could they bring themselves to believe that their future in Germany was hopeless. Naturally, Jews outside Germany who learned of the persecution, feared for the worst, and especially for the three million Jews in nearby Poland where discriminations in the past had been far worse than in Germany. By July 1933 the Gestapo had jailed more than twenty-six

thousand Jewish, Socialist and Communist Germans. Later, for example, at Dachau a regulation was issued to hang all "agitators." During the year of 1933 thirty-six Jews were murdered, six were killed by mobs, and three were killed "escaping," while thirty thousand Jews had emigrated mostly to West Europe, Britain and America.

As the Nazis attacks increased against the Jews and gained greater political support from the German people, pressures had begun for the American government to take appropriate action. Jewish and non-Jewish representatives of various organizations appealed to the Roosevelt administration to condemn Nazi repressions against Germany's Jewish citizens. The initial response from the State Department was discouraging by stating that departmental policy prevented the transmission of communications from private groups to foreign governments. Subsequently regarding requests for protests to the German government, a departmental memorandum stated that while it had been recognized that "considerable" persecution had occurred, it was an internal matter of the German government which the United States could do nothing about, and if it tried to interfere, it would only make matters worse. Furthermore, it said it was too late for such a representation to have any effect.

Distressed at the lack of any action by the government, American Jewish leaders had called on Secretary of State Cordell Hull as early as March 1933 requesting that the United States protest the Nazi treatment of the Jews in Germany. Hull, who had been continuously posted on the situation by American diplomats at Berlin, was informed that violence appeared to have lessened and he notified the Jewish representatives that "whereas there was for a short time considerable physical mistreatment of Jews, this phase may be considered virtually terminated." As American Jewish pressures for a protest by the government increased, Hull notified his Berlin Embassy that "outside intercession has rarely produced the results desired and has frequently aggravated the situation." It was an indication of the "do-nothing" policy which characterized the inaction of the Roosevelt Administration until the time had come when there was little that could be done to save the European Jews from extermination.

Oddly enough, the American Jewish Congress and the American Jewish Committee were in disagreement as to what Washington should do. The Congress advocated "militant actions" while the Committee believed a softer

approach would be more influential. However, Franklin Roosevelt decided that he could avoid creating any political liabilities by remaining silent and that, without his approval, the government would not become involved. Considering inaction by the government to be inexcusable, a Town Hall meeting was held in Madison Garden, New York and Dr. Jonah B. Wise of the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee charged that it was "difficult for Americans-Jews and Gentiles alike-to understand the silence of President Roosevelt in the face of one of the great human disasters of our time." Dr. Cyrus Adler, President of the Committee, pointed out that Britain, France and other governments had denounced Nazi actions against the Jews, cited innumerable examples of American intervention into the affairs of other nations, and declared that the United States, the traditional champion of liberty, had the moral responsibility to aid a persecuted minority of human beings.

By April 1, 1933, the American Embassy at Berlin advised Hull "that the situation is rapidly taking a turn for the worst," and a German suggestion was relayed for the United States to inform Hitler on the extent to which the world was seriously concerned about conditions in Germany. The suggestion was ignored. Then, as more information was received from Berlin on the worsening situation, the Secretary of State feared that the official recognition of such "exaggerated" reports would serve to prejudice relations between the United States and Germany." Soon afterwards a report from the American Consul General at Hamburg, reflecting the Washington attitude, stated that while certain acts of violence had occurred there had been considerable exaggeration by the news media. It also observed that the Nazi revolution had been well-managed, persons had been imprisoned in the interest of public order, and the best interests of the majority of Germans had been "well and satisfactorily served." Finally, it paid tribute to the Nazis for having eradicated for the world the plague of Communism in Germany.

Back in July 1929, the American immigration quota had been reduced by more than eighty percent to 153,774 persons per year with more than half restricted to Great Britain and Ireland from which few immigrants came to America. Other quotas were set at 26,000 for Germany, 6,000 from Poland, 5,500 from Italy, and 3,000 from France and the limitation of those figures determined the awesome fate of many of the Jews of Europe. In 1930, in an effort to

reduce unemployment in America which would reach 12,000,000 by 1933. President Herbert Hoover directed that visas be granted only to those who would not become a "public charge." Under the strict control of the State Department, only 35,000 persons were admitted to the United States in 1932. In spite of efforts by some congressmen to liberalize immigration in response to the rapidly increasing refugee crisis, the majority of congressmen vigorously opposed any change claiming that "undesirable classes including Communists will wish to come to this country." Moreover, the immigration act required applicants to provide proof of five years of good character, two certified birth certificates, and two copies of public record documents from the country of their origin, all of which would be next to impossible for the Jews to obtain from their Nazi oppressors. In effect, the law proved to be an almost totally effective method to avoid any substantial increase in political refugees coming to America from Europe.

Obviously, Secretary of State Cordell Hull was directed by Franklin Roosevelt to avoid the issue. Otherwise, it is inconceivable that Hull, with a Jewish wife and as a well-known internationalist, would not have pursued every action possible on such an important humane concern. Although up-to-date reports were continuously received from embassies and consulates in Germany about the assault against the Jews, including the existence of the concentration camps, Roosevelt informed his Berlin Ambassador that although he knew the Germans were treating the Jews "shamefully," it was not "a government affair" and that "we can do nothing except for American citizens." The position of the administration was confirmed when Vice President John Garner said that the United States had no business meddling into the internal affairs of the German government. It was apparent that one of the most politically-minded of America's presidents considered it to be a highly emotional and controversial issue relating to anti-Semitism on the one hand, and the brutal persecution of human beings on the other, and that it was an issue too politically volatile for his administration to become involved with during the on-going crisis concerning Germany and the possibility of another war. Nonetheless, his abandonment of his responsibility for moral leadership tragically resulted in the elimination of the Jew's only great hope for some substantial relief to the horrifying "Sacrifice of the Forsaken."

Paradoxically, Roosevelt had not hesitated in 1933 to champion the intensely controversial political recognition of the Soviet Union when the American

people were overwhelmingly and unalterably opposed to the Communist regime. By his considerable personal and political leadership, he had led the United States from a state of practical isolation into becoming the greatest military power in history. Almost immediately he had changed the American attitude from hostility to cooperation and support of the Soviets in the struggle against Hitler. Singlehandedly, he stubbornly and successfully insisted that the war's most controversial policy of unconditional surrender was maintained despite the opposition of Churchill, Stalin and his own military advisors. And his willful decision to largely ignore the desperate plight of the Jews, to ignore his moral responsibility to attempt to provide substantial help, and his use of the necessity to prosecute the winning of the war as an excuse for inaction, was not only an act of political cowardice and unforgivable shame, but it displayed an attitude of downright prejudice and deceit by America's "most popular liberal President."

Undeniably, the rapid popularity and strength of the Nazi party was based on the general German attitude of anti-Semitism and Hitler's determination to rid Germany of its Jews together with all evidence of their influence in the German Reich. Initially, the Nazis did not oppose emigration and, in fact, it was encouraged at a price. During 1934 more than 50,000 Jews left Germany and about 450,000 remained. Some hope for moderation of Nazi excesses took place in early 1935 when it appeared that conditions might improve, prisoners were released at Dachau, and some Jews even returned to Germany. By August more than 75,000 had left Germany with 30,000 having gone to Palestine. But soon Jewish people were being denied the right to practice a profession and to own and operate a business, and they were even denied entrance to public places. Then on September 15, 1935, the Nazi-controlled Reichstag adopted the infamous "Nuremberg Laws" which made second-class citizens of the Jews by banning their marriage to non-Jews. It was the first direct action against the Jews by the government and revealed to the world that the destruction of the Jews had become the national policy of the German state. Every aspect of society was dominated by the enforced state doctrine of racial hatred which was designed to gain the support of every "true" German citizen. In reality, it was a fabricated anti-Jewish campaign intended to discredit loyal German citizens of many generations who had contributed much to the culture and welfare of Germany, many of whom had served with honor and courage fighting for Germany in World War

I, so as to use false and criminal charges to gain the support of the people to rid Germany of its Jews by genocide.

While people throughout the world were shocked and repulsed by the Nazi reign of terror and brutality in Germany, the outcry was directed generally at the violence against Hitler's German political opponents, Communists, and other minority groups, as well as the Jews. There was, of course, great concern and distress in Jewish circles everywhere concerning the persecutions and violence even when little was known about either its extent or intention. Furthermore, most German Jews could do little but hope that it was only "a temporary aberration," and they did their best to adjust while praying for better conditions. By 1936, 80,000 Jews in Germany were being helped to survive by the remaining 320,000 Jews. However, by 1938 all had been deprived of most of their human rights and their persecutions were increased to levels of "open pogroms" when shops and homes were plundered and set on fire, synagogues were burned, and Jews were violently attacked in the streets. Soon the confiscation of properties and forced withdrawals from their jobs and businesses deprived them of their livelihood and dissolved their communities as they sought refuge from persecution in the larger cities. As early as 1938, one quarter of their communities had ceased to exist.

Up until 1938, Jews had been encouraged by the Nazi government to leave the country but, unfortunately, the Nazi "Emigration Policy" ran into difficulty. The major problem was that other countries would not accept large numbers of Jewish refugees. When it was suggested that 500,000 German Jews should be sent to Palestine only a minority were willing to consider it. Even when facing intimidation, persecution and violence, most of the Jews in Germany did not wish to leave. It was difficult, if not inconceivable, for most Jews to leave what had been their native land for many years as well as their families and friends, to forgo all their possessions, start an entirely new life again in a strange and foreign land, and to give up all hope of resuming a life for which they had struggled for so long. Actually, many were too poor, too old or not well enough to go anywhere. Then the Nazis began to pressure the Jews to leave for Palestine, and while the Zionists wanted them to strengthen their defense against the Arabs, their economic impact limited their admittance.

It was not long, however, before the Nazis and their sympathizers incited anti-Semitic persecutions in other European countries. Continuous propaganda

about developments in the Third Reich resulted in Hitler admiration in other countries including France and Britain. Anti-Jewish attacks and riots occurred in Rumania and anti-Semitic attacks increased in Poland where so many German Jews had sought refuge that some 12,000 had fled to Palestine. But as fighting erupted between the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine, Great Britain shut down all but token admissions which eliminated Palestine as a substantial hope for the escape of Europe's millions of Jews. Meanwhile, countries throughout the world refused to accept more than token numbers of emigrants even when it became increasingly apparent that without rescue by the free world, the Jews of Europe were doomed to a horrible fate of death and destruction. Stefan Lux, a German Jew, killed himself in a desperate plea for help for his fellow Jews after saying, "I do not find any other way to reach the hearts of men," since the persecutions had not overcome "inhuman indifferences."

At first it appeared that after five years of Hitler's Nazi regime, the terror against the Jews in Germany might lessen. In spite of a twenty-five percent tax on the wealth of all Jews, which further reduced their ability to survive, thousands of Jews were permitted to emigrate and fewer were being imprisoned or killed. In fact, the first fifteen hundred Jews sent to the concentration camps at Dachau and Buchenwald were released if they agreed to emigrate. But in Austria there were new and distressing terrors. Throughout 1937, Austrian Nazis were led by the Germans to step-up their street warfare against the Jews together with their plan of assassination to takeover the government. Then after German troops marched across the border in March 1938, all the Jews of Austria became potential victims of the Nazis. Violent assaults against the Jews were immediately launched in Vienna when many thousands of Jewish families were driven from their homes, 8,000 businesses were turned over to non-Jews, and over 30,000 Jews were forced out of their jobs. Throughout Austria every Jew was deprived of his civil rights and within a month there were five hundred suicides. Thousands fled to Vienna and many small towns, as in Germany, flew white flags to show they were rid of Jews. Thousands more crossed over into Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland before those countries imposed new limitations on refugees. By the fall of 1938, the notorious SS Officer Adolf Eichman's Central Office of Jewish Emigration had driven almost half of Austria's 300,000 Jews out of the country before the war began.

As the West continued its appeasement at Munich and the Sudetenland had been handed over to Germany by Czechoslovakia, Hitler suddenly expelled 18,000 Jews back to Poland who had come to Germany after World War I. Then, after the son of one of the expelled Jews shot and killed a German diplomat in Paris, a reign of terror against the Jews raged throughout Germany. Ninety-one Jews were killed, over thirty thousand were sent to concentration camps where more than a thousand were murdered, thousands were evicted from their homes, one hundred and ninety-one synagogues were set on fire, and the glass fronts of many thousands of shops were smashed in what became known as "Kristallnacht" (night of the broken glass). Later all German Jews were made to pay the cost of all damages by the confiscation of twenty percent of their possessions. A British diplomat in Berlin reported that Germany "has let loose forces of medieval barbarism," and that the German Jews live "at the mercy of a brutal oligarchy, which fiercely resents all humanitarian foreign intervention. Misery and despair are already there and when their resources are either denied to them or exhausted, their end will be starvation." He called it "not a national but a world problem which if neglected contains the seeds of a terrible vengeance." Thus 1938 had become "the year of transition between immigration and annihilation." No longer could the world refuse to acknowledge the threat of a horrible Nazi persecution for the Jews of Europe, and while it would be too late to avoid the Holocaust, much of its terrifying consequences could still have been avoided by courage and leadership from the West.

After Hitler's occupation of Austria in 1938 was welcomed by most Austrians, the persecution of the Jews in Germany, as well as in Austria, was significantly increased. Soon the outside world began to take notice, partly from Jewish group pressures in America, and reports of persecutions began to dominate the American media so that the Roosevelt Administration was forced to recognize the public demand for action by the government. Finding that he could put off groups and initiatives calling for action no longer, the President finally yielded to pressure and invited representatives of thirty-five nations to meet to discuss cooperative action to assist the emigration of refugees from Germany and Austria, in response to what he called, "the reaffirmation of America's traditional role as a haven for the oppressed." However, there was no intention to do anything but to prevent the liberalization of America's immigration quotas. Even as he announced

his proposal, FDR said there would be no change in the numbers of immigrants authorized to enter the United States. With many thousands of Jews in Germany and Austria expectantly waiting for visas to America, even the Nazis said that "we cannot take seriously President Roosevelt's appeal to the nations of the world as long as the United States maintains racial quotas for immigrants."

Finally, an international conference on the fate of the Jews took place in July 1938 at Evian, France and, as might have been expected, little was accomplished. At the time, approximately 150,000 Jews had found haven outside of Germany and Austria. 55,000 had come to America, 40,000 to Palestine, 15,000 into France, 14,000 into Switzerland, 8,000 each into Britain and Brazil, 2,000 into Belgium, and lesser numbers into Bolivia, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. By that time, it had become apparent that the Jews only hope for refuge had to be voluntarily offered by the countries of the free world to prevent their extermination by the Nazis. But tragically, one country after another indicated that there was little they could, or would, do to help. Australia reported "that as we have no racial problem, we are not desirous of importing one." New Zealand would not change its restrictions. Britain reported that there were no places in its colonial empire suitable for the settlement of large numbers of Jewish refugees. France claimed her population already included 200,000 refugees and three million aliens. Canada, Colombia, Venezuela and Uruguay agreed to take only agricultural workers. Peru was opposed to an influx of "intellectuals" as a threat to its ruling class and Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rico and Panama wanted no "traders or intellectuals." Argentina pointed out that with one-tenth the population, she had taken as many refugees as the United States. But little Holland, in addition to the 25,000 refugees already admitted, agreed to serve in a temporary capacity and Denmark agreed to take even more refugees into its small country.

The most that the United States, the traditional "land of the free" with its vast lightly inhabited areas and massive resources, was willing to do was to accept its full previously set legal quota of 27,370 immigrants from Germany and Austria with no distinction between Jew and non-Jew. Thus the action of the conference was largely limited to the establishment of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (ICR) at London. Its major challenge, to negotiate with Germany to solve the refugee problem, was considered to be unrealistic. American and British newspapers were critical that little had been accomplished. On the other hand,

there were influential groups, particularly in Britain and the United States, which were greatly upset over the prospect of the immigration of large numbers of refugees. Labor unions claimed unemployment would increase and the professions feared competition. Even Socialist doctors in Britain were worried about "non-union, non-Socialist labor," and the American Medical Association recommended that only citizens be licensed to practice.

Unfortunately, as the leader of the one nation in the world which could have organized and led the rescue of many, if not most, of the Jews of Europe, Franklin Roosevelt undertook a number of specific actions to avoid admission of any substantial number of Jews into the United States. At the Department of State in 1940, Breckinridge Long, FDR's personal friend and political ally, was placed in charge of twenty-three of the Department's forty-two divisions which included the all-important Visa Division. Foreign Service Officer Robert Reams, who served as Secretary of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, believed that Roosevelt directed Hull and Long to sit on all attempts to get the government to help the European Jews which, the President believed, would detract from the war effort. Long was fully aware of FDR's attitude on politically "sensitive" issues, and he and his aides immediately assumed the responsibility of acting as the patriotic defenders of America's traditional national character by resisting "an invasion by radicals and foreign agents."

The State Department policy had been set by its legal advisor in August 1933 holding that regardless of the plight of a refugee, under American law, he was required to apply to German authorities for documentation. It was that kind of restrictive interpretation of procedures which kept it difficult, if not impossible, for the desperate Jews from Germany and other German-dominated areas, to qualify for even the limited admissions to the United States that were available under previously existing legislation. Furthermore, specific efforts were made by Roosevelt's officials to prevent the established quotas from being increased. Unfortunately, US Ambassador William Bullit had revealed to Washington that when many people from Germany fled to France before the war, more than two hundred refugees were arrested by French counter-espionage services, and that over half were Jews who had sold themselves to be Hitler's agents. Thus State, apparently with Roosevelt's concurrence, found yet another "legitimate" excuse to restrict Jewish emigration to the United States.

Although media attention and public concern had greatly increased, and the American Jews and their political organizations were increasing their pressure on a President whom ninety percent of them had supported for election, Franklin Roosevelt continued to maintain the lowest possible profile regarding Jewish emigration. America's "first fully politicized President" was fully aware that there was considerable anti-Semitism in America and, in spite of his self-styled role as the "great democrat," he intentionally sought to avoid the politically controversial issue rather than demonstrate the moral and humane courage to save thousands and thousands of human beings from liquidation. Leo Crowley was shocked when FDR told him in January 1942, "this is a Protestant country, and the Catholics and the Jews are here on sufferance. It is up to both of you (Catholic Crowley and Jewish Henry Morgenthau), to go along with anything that I want at this time."

In spite of increasing reports of horror and desperate appeals for help from abroad and at home, no official protest was made to the Nazi government by the "world champion of freedom and democracy" in response to the terrible abuse and suffering of the Jews in Europe. Worst, no serious consideration was given to any initiatives by the Roosevelt administration to provide help and refuge for the millions of Jews in Europe who faced great suffering and death from Nazi persecution. The President chose the course of a manipulative politician rather than the leadership of a statesman with strong moral convictions, fearing that any action on behalf of Jews in general, and particularly any suggestion of an increase in the number of Jews being admitted to the United States, would threaten his political support by strong segments of the population. And the officials of his administration continued to maintain obstacles against any increase in the flow of refugees and to avoid any actions to save the Jews of Europe. In fact, it was widely believed that the President's refusal to become involved with the problem greatly contributed to American apathy, if not indifference, to the fate of millions of human beings. It was difficult to understand how a President, unlike any other, who had assumed total personal control of the domestic and foreign policies of the one nation in the entire world which had the principles, the leadership, the resources and the opportunity to save thousands and thousands of human beings, could refuse to provide, in the least, temporary relief to save the lives of so many fellow human beings.

No nation had ever been as generous as the United States as a refuge for the world's poor and oppressed peoples of all nations. From 1820, when records began, to 1933 more than 37,000,000 people came to the "land of the free and home of the brave" seeking economic, religious and political freedom. During the first fifteen years of the twentieth century the annual average was 900,000 immigrants. But in 1933, after several years of Nazi persecution of German Jews, only 23,000 persons were admitted out of an authorized quota of 153,000 of which only 1,800 were from Germany. During the years of 1933, 1934 and 1935, with Nazi treatment of the Jews becoming increasingly brutal, the number of Jews accepted by the United States averaged only 4,000 per year. Actually in the same period, more persons from Germany left the United States than were admitted. But shamefully, throughout the entire period of Nazi terror and the Holocaust, the total number of immigrants admitted to the United States was kept substantially below the quotas authorized even before the war began. Incredibly and scandalously, from 1933 to 1943, there were more than 1,200,000 unused openings of which 350,000 were allotted to German-dominated countries. Yet with many thousands of authorized vacancies available, the US government continued to refuse to permit more Jews to enter America. In 1943 alone, the existing quota would have permitted 150,000 persons to enter the United States, yet only 23,725 people were saved by admission. While millions of Jewish men, women and children were being faced with torture and murder, not only did the President, the government and the people of the United States fail to attempt to rescue the Jews, but they even failed to do what was clearly within their power to do. Moreover, the government of the United States of America, through the leadership of President Franklin Roosevelt and the example of its people, could have led other countries to join America in saving hundreds of thousands of lives in the Holocaust. Instead, it intentionally turned its back on the desperate crisis of European Jewry.

When the first meeting of the International Committee on Refugees occurred after the 1938 conference at Evian, reports were received urgently requesting refuge for 660,000 persons wishing to escape from Germany and Austria including 300,000 Jews, 285,000 Christians and 75,000 Roman Catholics who were judged to be of Jewish origin by the Nazis. Having been denied their livelihood and subjected to such brutal persecution and abuse, it was obvious that unless

the free world made a place for them, and granted at least temporary refuge for this terrified and suffering mass of humanity, it was destined to become one of the worst incidents of human genocide in world history. Pathetically, the predominant people and their governments, of both North and South America who either themselves or their ancestors had so greatly benefited from immigration to the New World, specifically denied the opportunity of life to thousands and thousands of Jews whose lives could have been saved.

Surprisingly, unexpected hope appeared in February 1939 when the Nazis indicated that Jews would be permitted to emigrate from Greater Germany which included Austria. Beginning with 150,000 emigres who could leave over a period of from three to five years, the proposal also specified that persecution of the remaining Jews would stop. Travel expenses would be provided from a trust fund backed-up by one-fourth the value of the property of the remaining Jews and the twenty-five percent exit tax on Jews would be rescinded. The sudden generosity was believed to have arisen from Nazi concern about the worldwide negative reaction to the violence of Kristallnacht, the extensive damage to non-Jewish as well as Jewish property, and a down-turn in German exports abroad. At the same time, however, the Nazis refused to permit non-Jewish refugees, including 75,000 Catholics, to leave Germany. When Hull was notified that the Germans would place the program into effect once they could be assured other countries were prepared to admit the refugees, instead of welcoming the opportunity to investigate the possibility of saving the lives of many thousands of human beings, he replied that his government could not permit another government to decide who the United States would or would not admit.

Numerous Americans leaders and groups, both Jewish and non-Jewish, attempted to persuade the Roosevelt administration to remove obstacles and loosen restrictions which were preventing the United States from helping to avert a great international tragedy. Specific proposals were submitted to the President involving special admissions for political and religious refugees, the revision of quotas, posting of bonds and the elimination of processing roadblocks at State, such as the "public charge" provision, and the substitution of certificates of good character for difficult to obtain Nazi police reports. State responded with legal objections to each proposal, together with a Congressional Committee quote on the Immigration Act of 1924 saying, "This country thus serves notice that it can

no longer be an asylum." Throughout his pre-war years as President, Roosevelt had insisted that "restrictionist elements in Congress would block any reform." But, according to Arthur Morse, no change would have been necessary since Roosevelt could have, had he wished, simplified the process by executive order just as easily as Herbert Hoover had blocked it. Instead, the Roosevelt administration not only insisted upon maintaining the existing immigration law throughout the period when the Jews could have been helped, but administered it with "severity and callousness." In the meantime by October 1938, Hitler had begun the expulsion of the German Jews to Poland and the general condition of the Jews in Germany had deteriorated so badly that there remained little hope for them.

According to biographer Ted Morgan, Roosevelt "wanted to run around the problem by working within the existing quota system and by looking for a place to put the Jews outside the United States." Breckinridge Long said that the President "expressed himself in entire accord with the policy which would exclude persons about which there was any suspicion that they would be inimical to the welfare of the United States no matter who had vouchsafed for them and irrespective of their financial and other standing." Roosevelt biographer James MacGregor Burns contends that Roosevelt's attitude on the plight of the European Jews was justified by the complicated "intractability" of the problem, the unlikelihood that Congress would change immigration laws, congressional and public opposition to the admission of large numbers of Jewish immigrants, and especially, that FDR believed nothing should interfere with his "single-minded pursuit of military victory," and that the most practical way that Jews could be helped would be by winning the war as quickly as possible. Numerous historians, however, who generally support the President's leadership during the war, consider his failure to have been more responsive to the crisis of the Jews was the greatest shame of his administration.

As early as January 1939, Adolf Hitler publicly proclaimed that should there be a war for which he was prepared, then "all Jews in Europe would be exterminated." Furthermore, the German people, as well as the world at large, had been warned about the fanatic and brutal intentions of the Nazi Fuehrer by his *Mein Kampf* book of 1925. US Protestant William L. Shirer at Berlin described Hitler's paranoid delusions about race as a "grotesque hodgepodge concocted by a half-baked uneducated neurotic." Furthermore, the dictator also had clearly stated

not only his aggressive political intentions, but outlined his twisted and fanatic concepts about Nordic racial superiority, the purity of Aryan blood, preservation of the species, and domination by the "master race." Finally, the ultimate goal of Nazism was horrorfyingly revealed when he said, "All who are not of good race in this world are chaff." No one, other than those who intentionally refused to, could fail to understand that the Nazi Fuehrer not only sought military conquest but also the elimination of the world's "inferior races."

The conquering Nazis found three million Jews in Poland and five million in Russia almost all of whom were eventually liquidated. They rounded-up as many Jews as they could find in the occupied territories in western Europe which were shipped in boxcars for "resettlement" and many thousands died of suffocation and deprivations under terrible transport conditions. Upon arrival at the death camps, those that survived and were fit to work were separated from the elderly, the sick and the children who were exterminated. At Warsaw, one year after the occupation of Poland, about 400,000 Jews were walled up in the old Jewish ghetto and, when they refused to die quickly, the Germans began their "resettlement" to the East. From July to October in 1942, 310,000 were shipped to Treblinka alone where most of them were killed with gas.

More than thirty principal concentration camps were established where millions of prisoners were worked, tortured, starved, and murdered. The major death centers with gas chambers were located at Auschwitz, Treblinka, Belsec, Sibibor, Chelmno and Majdanek in Poland. At those camps alone, Lucy Dawidowicz reports that approximately 5,370,000 persons were gassed including Gypsies and thousands of non-Jews along with many other thousands who were shot or died of disease and starvation. Minor camps were operated at Minsk, Vilna, Riga, Kaunas and Lwow in the East where many were executed by weapons. Total estimates indicate that as many as eight million inmates died including more than two million Soviet "untermenchen" (sub-humans) out of the 5,750,000 Russian prisoners-of war taken by the Germans. 3,800,000 Soviet soldiers had been captured in the initial attacks on Russia and untold numbers perished when they were left exposed without food and shelter in the sub-zero winter weather of 1941-42. Two million Russians died in captivity from overwork, exposure, starvation and disease, one million served in German military units or were released, and barely one million remained alive when the camps were finally liberated.

The brutal and terminal Nazi treatment of the Jews represented the ultimate consequences of the prevalence of virulent racial hatred which Adolf Hitler intentionally exploited to obtain political power in Germany. The National Socialists had based the foundation of their political movement upon racial hatred and emotionalism and the members of the party, as well as most of the German people, were thoroughly inflamed and indoctrinated with the belief that the Jews were responsible for all the major problems of the German people. At the same time, they were so convinced that their Nordic race was deemed to rule the world, that they accepted and supported the Nazi claim that the Jews and the Bolsheviks, who were "founded by the Jews," were sub-human and should be exterminated. Accordingly, when the liquidation of the Jews was undertaken, which necessarily involved the participation and the knowledge of much of the German population, there was a total lack of opposition of any kind and little help, or even sympathy, was extended to the Jews. The fact was that the vast majority of the German people concurred with Adolf Hitler's views about the Jews and, of course, after the war most Germans claimed they had no knowledge about the fate of the Jews. If that was true, the only way that they could not have known would have been because they did not care.

As the persecutions increased, more and more of the Jews sought to escape from Germany and initially, most of those who wished to leave and could get a visa to another country, did so. But it rapidly became more difficult and escape became impossible until, according to Heinrich Himmler's masseur Felix Kersten, the Gestapo chief said that the Fuehrer had ordered him to get rid of the Jews and that up until the spring of 1940, they could leave "without trouble." Himmler had added that he had never wanted to destroy the Jews and that it had been Josef Goebbels inflammatory speeches after "Kristalnacht" who was responsible for their ultimate destruction. Since the SS was fully occupied with the task involving the expulsion of Jews from Germany from the beginning of the Nazi regime, it is argued that it is a popular but false assertion that the SS, instead of Adolf Hitler, instigated the extermination of the Jews.

Considerable controversy still exists as to the circumstances regarding the decision to initiate "The Final Solution." Hitler's anti-Jewish views were well-established and the record shows that he often spoke of the necessity to rid Germany of its Jews. However, it has not been clearly established if the Nazi

policy for the elimination of the Jews by genocide was ordered by Adolf Hitler, or whether it evolved as an extended development of the "resettlement" of the Jews in Poland and the round-up and execution orders for partisans, Communist commissars, "and Jews" in the occupied areas of the Soviet Union? Lucy Dawidowicz writes that in 1939 Goering empowered the Gestapo deputy leader Rheinhard Heydrich to do whatever was necessary to force the emigration of German Jews as Eichman had successfully done in Austria. Furthermore, she says, "emigration" meant "expulsion," and once war began "deportation" meant transportation to a death camp. Unquestionably, as Dawidowicz states, the extermination of the Jews was the "consummation of his (Hitler's) fundamental beliefs and ideological conviction." He willfully converted his political anti-Semitism into a "racial doctrine of extermination," and branded Bolshevism as a "Jewish conspiracy for world rule" to justify his aggression against the Soviet Union as a "crusade" to save the world from Communism.

The fact is that within days after the Germans invaded Poland in 1939, Heydrich referred to the elimination of Polish Jews, intelligentsia, clergy and nobility as a general "housecleaning" when he said that the eleven million Jews of Europe were to be used as slave labor for the war, and those who could not work would be exterminated. Western Poland was to be "cleared completely of Jews," and elsewhere the Jews were to be concentrated in ghettos at railway centers so that the "ultimate aim" (i.e. "final solution") could be accomplished more easily. On July 31, 1941 following Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union, Goering instructed Heydrich to "solve" the Jewish problem "by emigration and evacuation," and the first slave labor camps were erected at Treblinka, Sobibor and Belzec. Obviously, the Nazi death policy had been established long before the attack on Russia as the Einsatzgruppen (Death squads) had already been organized to accomplish their grisly tasks as soon as the German military began to occupy the Soviet Union.

The conquest of Poland had made two million additional Jews available to the Nazis and the invasion of Russia eventually turned over to them three million more Jews in Eastern Poland, Latvia, Estonia, White Russia and in the Ukraine, Crimea and Russia proper. Most of the Jews lived in the major cities such as Warsaw, Lodz, Riga, Kiev, Kharkov, Cracow, Vilna and Lublin and others were found in the smaller centers such as Bialystok, Odessa and Minsk where they had

settled in as many as 16,000 local communities. The Nazis had found 400,000 Jews in Warsaw (more that in all of France), 200,000 at Lodz (exceeded all in Czechoslovakia), 150,000 in Kiev (about the same as in the Netherlands), 100,000 at Lwow (equal those in Belgium, Luxembourg, Denmark and Norway), 56,000 at Cracow (as many as in Italy), and 55,000 at Vilna (more than in all Bulgaria).

Within hours of the initial German attack against the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, they began the systematic destruction of every possible Jew in Europe which would continue for almost four horrible years. Obviously ordered by Hitler and Himmler, Heydrich had devised plans for the liquidation of the Jews before the war, and in 1941 they approved Heydrich's efficiently organized methods to eliminate the Jews of Europe. Regardless of when the specific decision was made, it was a fact that, according to Heinz Hohne, "the annihilation of the Jews was present in the hearts and the minds of the SS long before the actual order was given." There is also evidence that the mass extinction concept originated elsewhere for it is known that Hitler and Himmler had been impressed with Stalin's "Bolshevist method" for eliminating millions of his opponents and "undesirable" elements in the Soviet Union.

The governments of the United States and Great Britain had received reports that the Nazis were shipping the Jews of Europe to Poland and that, since the Nazi attack on Russia in 1941, the mass executions of hundreds of thousands of Jews was taking place in Poland and Russia. However, it was not until August 1, 1942, that the World Jewish Congress representative in Switzerland learned from a source in Germany that Hitler had ordered the extermination of the Jews of Europe and that the deportation of men, women and children to concentration camps in Poland signified the commencement of their destruction. Soon other reports of mass murders began to surface including the massacre of 700,000 Jews in Poland, the shipment east of many thousands of Jews from Paris, Holland, Berlin, Vienna and Prague, and that 380,000 Jews were being "resettled" from the Warsaw ghetto.

American Jewish leaders believed that if such shocking information could be confirmed to the US and British governments, which had shown little interest in the plight of the Jews, cooperative international action could begin to save the overwhelming majority of European Jews who were still alive. But when they

informed the Department of State at Washington of Hitler's plan to eliminate the Jews, the report was considered to have been so incredible that it was met with "universal disbelief," and the information was suppressed. But even after confirmation from American embassies abroad and a corroborating document sent to President Roosevelt from Czechoslovakia, State released no information to the American public about the "ominous" developments. Finally, after so many reports were received in Washington that they could no longer be ignored, State made contact with the Vatican requesting confirmation. The Vatican, however, consistent with the controversial attitude of Pope Pius II throughout the war, took the position that any involvement of the Holy See against the Nazis would make conditions more difficult for the church in Germany and increase, rather than decrease, death among the Jews. State was also advised that such reports on the persecution of the Jews had reached Rome but the Vatican could not vouch for their accuracy.

Roosevelt had refused to believe the early reports about Hitler's extermination plans and said that the Jews were being deported to build fortifications on the Polish border with Russia, and even the American OSS branded such reports as "a wild rumor inspired by Jewish fears." But in late 1942, one year after America had entered the war, Jewish leaders presented the President a twenty-page document entitled "Blueprint for Extermination," which detailed the horrors of the European tragedy. They pleaded with FDR to negotiate directly with the Nazis for the release of the Jews, for the Allies to permit medical supplies for the Jews to pass through the blockade of Germany, to convince other countries to admit more Jewish refugees, and to suspend immigration quotas for the emergency. FDR assured them that action would be taken to save the Jews and that the perpetrators of such war crimes would be punished.

As a consequence, British and American representatives met in Bermuda in April 1943 to discuss refugee problems. But Roosevelt actually opposed any substantial commitments for relief of the refugee emergency by banning any pledge of funds, not to allocate any ships for transportation, nor to attempt to revise immigration quotas. Breckinridge Long and the State Department, representing the President, dominated the proceedings and a British representative called the meeting nothing more than "a facade for inaction." To make matters worse, Britain later announced a deadline of March 31, 1944 when Jews would no

longer be admitted to Palestine. While most American Jewish leaders believed that the Jews had a right to enter Palestine, Roosevelt was determined not to create difficulties with either the British or the Arabs on the question, and refused to take a position.

In the meantime, Hull advised the President that unfilled existing quotas would accommodate an appropriate number of refugees from Europe, but that attempts to increase quotas would only arouse Congress where support for "a drastic curtailment of immigration" already existed. Roosevelt concurred and expressed his conviction that there was nothing he could do but to maintain existing law. It was yet another unforgivable refusal to meet the moral responsibility for leadership by an American president, and particularly by one who represented himself as a champion of liberty and of the plight of the poor and the downtrodden. But, unfortunately, Roosevelt was much more a politician than a humanitarian. It was also true that by 1938, the popularity of the New Deal was declining and the President was under constant attack. His failed court-packing plan had left him with increased physical difficulties and the media and Congress had declared "open season" on FDR. He appeared to be "sinking," seemed to be no longer interested in being president. And he informed his close advisor Harry Hopkins, the former social worker, that he was the only man he wanted to be his successor as President. It appeared that whatever goals and ambitions the President had set for the United States had been placed aside and that he had given up the responsibilities of leadership for which he had been reelected. The attack on Pearl Harbor, however, quickly changed everything and soon the "Happy Warrior" was dedicated to the total destruction of the enemy, with which nothing was allowed to interfere, not even the survival of the Jews of Europe.

While the American government continued to avoid becoming directly involved in the plight of the European Jews, the Nazis had deported thousands upon thousands of Jews from the occupied areas to the death camps in East Poland for liquidation. The slaughter of the Jews from occupied Poland had been almost completed in 1942 except for the 50,000 who remained in the Warsaw Ghetto. 840,000 Jews had been gassed at Treblinka, 600,000 at Belzac, 250,000 at Sobibor, and 360,000 at Chelmor. In August 1942 alone, more than 400,000 Jews were murdered by the Germans. 145,000 were slaughtered at Belzec and 140,000 from Warsaw, 30,000 from Radom, 20,000 from Kielce, and 60,000

from central Poland were exterminated at Treblinka. In the meantime, the Einsatzkommando killing squads following the German Army assault on the Soviet Union had rounded-up most of the Jews in the ghettos. Supported by a German army order that the "struggle against Bolshevism demands ruthless and energetic measures, above all against the Jews, the main carriers of Bolshevism," and with the enthusiastic help of Ukrainian nationalists, the vicious massacre of the Jews proceeded relentlessly throughout occupied Western Russia. Meanwhile, the construction of crematoria and gas-chambers had been expanded to Birkenau and other camps, and deportations from France and Western Europe had begun. The infamous Wannsee Conference at Berlin had secretly coordinated preparation of the "final solution" of the Jewish question for the eleven million Jews of Europe including those from Britain, Sweden, Spain, Turkey and Switzerland.

By 1943, many of the remaining Jews were being told that they were being resettled to a neutral country through a special exchange program. Acts of resistance and sabotage, particularly from armed Jews in the ghettos and by Russian partisan groups, ten percent of which were Jewish fighters, inevitably resulted in fierce reprisals. Meanwhile, Birkenau had become the main "killing center" for most of the remaining Jews from occupied Europe. While Roosevelt and Churchill ignored the Jewish tragedy at their Casablanca conference, almost a trainload a day arrived at Auschwitz from Berlin, Holland and Belgium in the west, and from the Grodno and Bialystok areas to the east, bringing many thousands of Jews to their death in the gas chambers. Moreover, more Wehrmacht defeats by Stalin's "Bolshevist" troops further incensed the Nazi's hatred of the Jews and resulted in concentrated efforts to complete the extermination of the Jews before the war could end. In April 1943, after the Jews in Warsaw found out that the Germans planned to destroy them with their ghetto, they resolved no longer to surrender without resistance. When more than 2,000 Germans attacked the ghetto about 1,200 Jewish fighters counter-attacked with whatever weapons were available, and even though they were greatly outmatched, their fierce resistance gained worldwide attention. While nearby Soviet forces intentionally refused to come to their aid, remarkably, the battle raged for twenty-eight days against the overwhelming German force. More than 7,000 Jewish

fighters were killed, many Jews committed suicide rather than surrender, and 30,000 Jews were deported to Treblinka.

At the end of 1943, the shipment and executions of the Jews by the Germans had become a desperate urgency to complete and erase all possible evidence of the "final solution." At Treblinka Himmler ordered that hundreds of thousands of corpses should be dug up and burned. At Borki 30,000 bodies of Russian and Italian soldiers, as well as Jews, were removed from long burial trenches and were destroyed by fire. Afterwards the bones were ground to powder by machines and scattered in other places. Disinfection and new earth was placed in empty graves and grass was planted to remove all evidence of the atrocities. Throughout the Eastern areas the on-the-spot mass killings of Jews frantically continued, and the many thousands of Jews who had escaped capture and remained free in central and eastern Poland and in the Ukraine, continued to be hunted down by the Germans.

Due to the continuing delays and opposition of the US Department of State, Treasury Secretary Henry Morganthau began to do what he could to develop American help for the refugees. He arranged for his department to sponsor the evacuation of 70,000 Jews from Rumania with $170,000 to be deposited in a Swiss bank for collection by Rumania after the war. State blocked the scheme claiming that it would provide the enemy with foreign exchange. When Morganthau learned that State had announced its support for a Commission to Save European Art and Monuments when it had consistently fought all attempts to save European Jewry from the Nazis, he realized it would be necessary to force the Roosevelt administration into any effective action. He complained to Hull that the British position on limiting Jewish immigration to Palestine meant the acceptance of the death of thousands of Jews rather than to find the means for their salvation. Thus Morganthau became determined to confront the President with the facts so that he would be required to take action to avoid unfavorable political repercussions.

By early 1944 Morganthau arranged for three Protestant associates in the Treasury Department to prepare a documented report entitled "Acquiescence of This Government in the Murder of the Jews." It charged the State Department with failure to use existing procedures to save the Jews, intentional actions which prevented their rescue, concealment and misrepresentation of fact, false and misleading information, failure of duty, and anti-Semitism by officials of the State

Department. Morganthau himself presented the shocking document as a "Personal Report" to the President who was assured that the economic prosecution of the war would in no way be impaired by American actions to rescue the Jews. The appointment of a committee of experts to develop a plan "of immediate action designed to save the surviving Jewish people of Europe from extinction at the hands of Nazi Germany" was recommended.

The Morganthau report refuted the previous testimony of Long before a congressional committee claiming that 560,000 refugees had been admitted to the United States since Hitler had assumed power in Germany. Rather, the report showed that from July 1, 1933 through June 30, 1943, only a total of 476,930 aliens were admitted to America when existing quotas allowed the admission of 1,500,000 persons. The truth was that the Roosevelt administration had actually limited the total number of Jews from all countries to only 165,756, slightly more than ten percent of America's already established quotas. Obviously, "the most political of Presidents" immediately saw that public disclosure of the Morganthau report would be disastrous for his administration. Action could no longer be avoided and FDR quickly announced the establishment of a War Refugee Board, as proposed by Morganthau, which committed the government to take "all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression ...consistent with the successful prosecution of the war." Finally, the American President and his government had been forced to adopt a policy which would attempt to respond to the desperate pleas for help by millions of human beings facing extinction. But the Moscow Declaration of 1943 by Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin, made no reference whatsoever to the Jewish tragedy, which aroused the American Jewish community, and Franklin Roosevelt was forced to make a strong statement which had been prepared by the Board. But by then it was too late for hundreds and hundreds of thousands of Jews who had already been exterminated.

Undoubtedly, Morganthau had forced Roosevelt's hand. The President wanted to continue to avoid being placed in the middle of an emotional controversy between a Congress opposed to the liberalization of immigrant quotas and various Jewish and public groups who were pressing for action by the government. But even Roosevelt's personal Jewish advisors Bernard Baruch, Felix Frankfurter and Samuel Rosenman also preferred to avoid a politically controversial issue and did not support Jewish efforts to gain a commitment from the

administration to attempt to save the Jews. Therefore, it was February 1944 before the War Refugee Board (WRB) could get into action and by then any substantial relief for the Jews in Europe had become hopeless. By that time, the siege of Leningrad had ended, the occupation of Hungary by the Soviets was imminent, the cross-channel assault on France would soon be unleashed, and the tide of war had turned against the Germans. But before they could be stopped by a final defeat, the Nazis continued every possible effort to complete the extermination of the Jews. It was obvious that although Hitler knew he would lose the war against the Allies, he was determined to win his war with the Jews. But the governments of the United States and Britain now assumed there was little they could do to stop the mad killing other than to end the war as soon as possible.

The War Refugee Board, however, began to use the continuous pressure of threats of criminal retribution after war's end against the governments of the countries that had been allied with Germany in an effort to stop the shipment of Jews to the extermination camps in Poland. In March 1944, negotiations took place with the Rumanians which returned 48,000 Jews from the Transnistrian camps and transit visas were obtained which enabled several thousand Hungarian Jews to escape on ships out of Rumanian ports. In Bulgaria, a coordinated campaign was launched which successfully overturned anti-Semitic laws and saved the 45,000 remaining Jews. But actions of the Board were often delayed or blocked in the State Department, and efforts to force the International Red Cross to intervene brought the response that it was prevented from interfering in "the internal affairs of a belligerent nation." When the Board initiated efforts to have the Red Cross accord the Jews the same rights as other prisoners, it refused to go beyond its "traditional capacity" and again with the internal non-intervention excuse, they refused to increase their representation at Budapest until after more than 400,000 of Hungary's 600,000 Jews had been deported to the ovens of Auschwitz. In the last phases of the war, however, Red Cross representatives helped many refugees in Slovakia, Budapest, Rumania and Bulgaria, as well as in concentration camps, in addition to their major activity of assistance to three million Allied prisoners-of-war.

By late 1944 the Board had succeeded with its "energetic intervention" to obtain Allied cooperation for the Red Cross to distribute relief supplies and rescue operations which helped thousands of prisoners in the concentration camps

during the final months of the war. Furthermore, the WRB representative in Switzerland got the relief of supplies and assistance into areas where Jews were being held, and many were helped to escape from France into Spain. Also, by 1944 the Germans were desperately attempting to cover up all evidence even of the presence of the European Jews. In some areas, such as the Lodz ghetto where 80,000 Jews remained, efforts were made to eliminate them through starvation. Adolf Eichmann worked desperately to deport the 750,000 Jews remaining in Hungary. While Hungarian leaders had agreed to release 100,000 to work on war production, they had stalled on the shipment of the remainder. But even while the Soviet's closed in on the Baltics and the Allies landed at Normandy, many thousands of Jews were deported to Birkenau on trains arriving two-a-day from Hungary, as well as from Germany, Italy, France, Belgium, and Holland.

Renewed pressures were made on Germany's allies to cooperate with the German deportation of their Jews including such diverse areas as Macedonia in Yugoslovia and Thrace in Greece. Initially Italy, Finland and Hungary had refused to turn over its Jews to the Germans. In fact, numerous efforts were made to protect the Jews, not only in Italy, but in Tunis and occupied France as well. Mussolini had opposed numerous German efforts to depose the Italian Jews and, immediately after his fall from power in July 1943, the Germans began to round-up Italy's 37,000 Jews. Some escaped, several thousand were given refuge by Catholic Italians, the Vatican gave shelter to several hundred, and almost 5,000 were hidden in the monasteries and convents of Rome. But within sixty days, over 7,000 were deported from Northern Italy and almost all were gassed at Auschwitz.

When the Allied "Second Front" finally occurred at Normandy, many of Europe's remaining Jews took heart that the war might soon be over and the horrible genocide against the Jews would mercifully end. But under Roosevelt's "unconditional surrender" policy, millions of Russian, Allied and Axis soldiers remained locked in a meaningless final death struggle already decided which added hundreds of thousands of additional victims to the funeral pyres of prejudice, hatred and blunder. Military combat, death and destruction from aerial bombing, starvation, and the demonic fury of the death camp furnaces continued to consume human life in the greatest holocaust in human history. Now that their cherished dream of a "Thousand Year Reich" had been betrayed, and the

apocalyptic destruction of Germany was certain, the revengeful Nazis were determined that at least the hated Jews of Europe would die with them.

The Soviets were also ready to begin their "Great Offensive" which would carry their troops into East Europe. In September 1944 the Germans had been forced out of Latvia and Estonia and by October the Red Army had broken into Hungary and Czechoslovakia. But furious German defensive actions continued in Poland and on the major approaches to Germany itself. In the meantime, however, the Germans never stopped their assault against the Jews. The infamous Dr. Josef Mengele continued to carry out his revolting experiments on fifteen hundred Jewish twins at Auschwitz. Jews at Birkenau and other death camps were being gassed, and throughout the remaining areas occupied by the Germans, Jews were being hunted and shot, and the remaining occupants of the Lodz ghetto were lured to the death camps by the solicitation of "volunteers" for work on the outside. Even as the Red Army approached the Maly Trostenets camp near Minsk, SS troops locked all Jewish and Russian inmates in their barracks and set the buildings on fire.

After having successfully deported 437,000 Hungarian Jews for extermination, the Nazis were working fanatically to ship the remaining 170,000 Jews before the Russians could reach Budapest. Fortunately for some of the Jews, in the United States the World Jewish Congress, the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and the War Refugee Board with the cooperation of the State Department, managed to convince the Swedish government to send Raoul Wallenberg to Budapest to do what he could to save the surviving Jews of Hungary. As the Soviets neared Budapest in October, the Jews were forced to dig trenches and Adolf Eichmann obtained permission of the Hungarian government to march 25,000 Jews into Germany "for forced labor." Wallenberg had carried with him Swedish visas for 630 Jews and he and Swiss Consul Charles Lutz saved 25,000 Jews by placing them under their protection. But 30,000 Jews were forced to move on foot towards the Austrian border and seven thousand were shot or died during the march. In the last nightmare of death, it was too late for anything to be done to avert the final agony of the Jews. The trapped Nazis were consumed with intensified hatred for the Jews, who they blamed for the loss of the war, and the frenzied slaughter became a last-minute obsession to avenge the destruction and death of the German Reich.

By October 1944, the Germans were destroying documents in the eastern camps which might reveal the extent and horror of the exterminations. Prisoner files listing charges and containing death certificates were burned. Every possible evidence of the crimes, including buildings, gas chambers and crematoria, were destroyed and the remaining Sonderkommandos (prisoners forced to handle the mechanics of the genocide), were murdered. Thousands of Jews were then forced to march to other camps and to factories in Germany, and if too ill or weak to bear the new torture, they were shot on the spot and many thousands were killed. Soon the Russians occupied East Poland and almost all of Hungary. In some Polish areas, as the Jews emerged from hiding, they were attacked by Poles and killed. In Budapest Hungarian Nazi gangs had raged through the city slaughtering many Jews. And in all the areas still under German control the insane brutal final massacre of every possible Jew continued.

The Russians entered Warsaw and Budapest on the same day of January 17, 1945. At Warsaw where more than 500,000 Jews had been an important part of the community, not more than 200 Jews had survived in hiding. At Budapest, assisted greatly by Wallenberg and Lutz, 120,000 Jews remained. But the evidence against the Germans was so overwhelming it could not be removed and, for example, at Treblinka east of Warsaw, the Soviets found vast areas covered with the bones and clothing of the victims. Still there were 16,000 mostly Polish prisoners under German control at Auschwitz, at Birkenau 15,000 mainly Jews, at Monowitz 10,000 Jews, Poles and others remained, and there were 16,000 Jews and others at the Auschwitz factories. On January 18, 1945 the final evacuations began and during the death marches tens of thousands died or were killed and their bodies left in roadside ditches. In the Danzig and Konigsberg area labor camps were largely evacuated by sea.

The last remaining prisoners in the eastern camps were driven towards Germany's most notorious concentration camps such as Dachau, Belsen, Buchenwald, Ravensbruck, Sachsenhausen and Mauthausen. During the final months of the war, long lines of prisoners moving by foot and by train converged upon the camps as last-resort holding areas to meet continuing war labor needs. Subjected to great overcrowding, lack of food, disease and even Allied air raids, yet so close to liberation, the killing of the Jews continued. Finally, but generally much too late, the Allies began to reach the camps. At Belsen, the British found

ample evidence of liquidation by starvation. Out of ten thousand unburied bodies most had been starved to death and many inmates continued to die from disease as well as starvation. In April Buchenwald and Nordhausen, along with more than a hundred other prisoner installations, had been overrun. With the end of the war only two weeks away, the SS continued to kill Jews in various locations. Pitifully, even after liberation, more than 26,000 Jews died because they had been so weakened by mistreatment that recovery was impossible.

Meanwhile at Berlin, cowering in a hidden bunker beneath the Reichchancellery and consumed by hatred to the end, Adolf Hitler's last words before his suicide claimed that the responsibility for "this murderous struggle" belonged to those "who either were of Jewish origin or worked for Jewish interests." Even while the Fuehrer's body was being burned by his henchmen, nearly 3,000 Jews were being forced marched from Rehmsdorf and only fifteen hundred arrived at Theresienstadt alive. Then finally, on May 2 Berlin surrendered to the Soviets. Where there had been thirty-three thousand Jews in Berlin as late as 1942, only 162 had survived in hiding. But the grisly evidence continued to overwhelm the victors as the death camps of Germany were liberated. At Mauthausen, for example, the Americans were shocked to find a common burial pit which contained the remains of almost ten thousand human beings most of whom were Jews. In fact, Mauthhausen had the highest number of officially listed exterminations of any camp within Germany—35,318. And many, many thousands of survivors died in the concentration camps as a result of sickness, malnutrition, and over-work. In addition to millions of Jews and Soviet prisoners-of-war, untold thousands and thousands of German civilians who opposed the Nazis, mental patients, cripples, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, Austrians, Czechs, Poles, Russians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Greeks, Serbs, Italians, French, Dutch and other nationalities were also murdered by the Germans.

To this day it remains inconceivable how a small group of political gangsters supporting an ideology of violence and aggression could successfully and peacefully takeover one of the world's most advanced, and supposedly civilized, societies and to use its people and its resources to commit the most heinous crime against humanity in the history of mankind. Many explanations and excuses have been attempted, such as: (1) Every human is guilty of some kind of prejudice particularly regarding those who are different mainly because they do not

understand them; (2) Prejudice has existed against the Jews for centuries and particularly in Europe; (3) When segregated, the Jews were misunderstood and disliked because their religion and customs were different and, when assimilated, they were disliked because they were usually successful in business, the professions, and were active in the politics of social change; (4) German traditions of mythology and nationalism offered the demagogue "an emotional hotbed of reaction ready for exploitation;" (5) Germans were subjected to the demonic and mesmerizing will of Adolf Hitler; (6) the general belief that Germany had been falsely accused and betrayed at Versailles; (7) the disastrous depression caused by chaotic economic conditions; (8) failure of the German people to oppose the persecution of the Socialists, Jews and Communists as well as the armed aggression against Germany's neighbors; (9) the appeasement of the Nazis by Britain, France and the Soviet Union; (10) the unwillingness of the free nations to provide asylum for the Jews of Europe even on a temporary basis; and (11) the refusal of Franklin D. Roosevelt and his administration to recognize the plight of the Jews in Europe and to provide the leadership and the assistance of the United States when hundreds of thousands of Jews could have been saved from extinction. At last in May 1945, the most horrific catastrophe and the most shameful aberration in history was mercifully over.

The slaughter of military conflict and the Nazi extermination of human beings had finally ended. Six million Jews had been exterminated by the Nazis—four million were gassed and two million were shot, and still, endless ordeals awaited the liberated and displaced persons from the concentration camps of Germany as the suffering and death of many thousands continued. Many thousands of Russian prisoners and those that had been impressed into the German army who refused to go home, were forcibly returned to the Soviet Union, with the shameful concurrence of Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, where most of them were killed or died in Soviet prisons. Starvation and pestilence raged in many areas of Europe. Millions of displaced human beings had to be housed, fed and relocated and much suffering and torment had to be overcome. Thousands and thousands of German and Axis soldiers were imprisoned in Russia and most never returned home again. The actual number of the millions of people who died during and after the war will never be known.

It is estimated that more than fifty million human beings died during World War II including ten million victims who were intentionally murdered by the Nazis, six million Jews and four million non-Jews, and millions more who died directly from post-war circumstances. The total number of prisoners-of-war and displaced persons that were liberated from Nazi slavery exceeded eleven million. Of the 200,000 Jews who survived the effects of maltreatment, disease and starvation, three-fourths returned to the countries of their origin, but there were sixty-five thousand Polish and Lithuanian Jews who had no place to go. Efforts were made to get the British to accept 100,000 into Palestine, but further immigration was forbidden. Although the Jewish underground movement managed to smuggle limited numbers of refugees from Europe into Palestine, the ultimate fate of most of the survivors could not be determined.

The Holocaust represented the most evil and inhuman acts ever committed by man—the willful and systematized murder of so many millions of men, women and children. Crimes that were so barbaric and repulsive to civilized human beings that they cannot be imagined. It was a total desecration of human existence and of the meaning and purpose of life that can never be excused or forgotten. Nor can it be blamed solely upon the satanic Adolf Hitler. The will of one man, no matter how powerful, cannot carry a nation without popular support. He intentionally used the German people to fulfill his evil ambitions, but the monstrous deeds committed by the German Nazis could not have been perpetrated without the acquiescence, if not the cooperation, of the German people themselves. The implementation of the "Final Solution" would have been impossible, even within a police state, without the participation and assistance of the German people at practically every phase of the horrendous extermination program.

Civilization's ultimate tragedy occurred, Henry L. Mason believes, because of "interactions between totally heterogeneous phenomena: messianic fanaticism and bureaucratic structure, pathological ideology and routinized administrative decrees, archaic modes of thinking and a highly complex modern society." It is also clear that humanity in general abandoned the Jews by choosing not to try to do anything substantial to relieve their desperate plight. The extent of widespread prejudice in the Roosevelt administration, as well as the United States, cannot be overlooked. Certainly, Roosevelt's excuse that it might detract from winning the war is unconvincing. Hundreds of thousands could have been saved just as

millions of Americans were politically prepared for a war in which they did not want to become a participant. Admittedly, it would have been difficult to find permanent refuge for such a large body of humanity, particularly during the desperate period of a world war. However, the principal tragedy was that no major effort was even attempted. Surely, many thousands could, and should, have been saved even if only temporarily. Hundreds of thousands of German and Italian prisoners were provided for during the war, and hundreds of thousands of prisoners and refugees were resettled after the war. If Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill had done what they could and should have done, the lives of hundreds of thousands of Jewish men, women and children would have been saved.

Could more have been done without having detracted from the successful prosecution of the war in spite of Roosevelt's claim to the contrary? In the very least, America could have filled its unused quotas. Reportedly, unpublished State Department documents for 1943 prove that a great many more Jews could have been admitted to the United States which would not have interfered with the conduct of the war and, in fact, would have "strengthened" the Allied cause. The truth was that numerous opportunities to have assisted the Jews were never investigated nor attempted, such as the revision of American immigration law, simplification of State Department visa processing, operational authority, and action by the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, American led and international cooperative efforts to develop temporary and permanent refuge locations and facilities, stronger international pressure on German and Axis governments, greater emphasis on war crimes to be charged after the war, recognition and support of German resistance groups inside Germany and her satellites, greater pressure on Britain for admission of refugees into Palestine, enlarged operations of concealment and escape from areas controlled but not occupied by the Germans, a strong campaign to smuggle and air-drop arms to resisting Jews, precision air attacks on SS barracks and slave-labor factories when not occupied, expanded medical and food relief to camp inmates, organized and expanded escape routes, among others.

The Holocaust will forever remain incomprehensible. It is impossible to imagine or to understand the nature and the magnitude of terror and human suffering which was willfully perpetrated upon millions of innocent and defenseless

men, women and children, nor how it was possible for a supposedly civilized modern society to permit such a horrifying atrocity to occur. The Germans argue that there was also much anti-Semitism in many other countries including the United States and Great Britain, and that the Jews in Germany with their strange and different religion, morals and manners, liberal political views, and dominance in high-profile sectors of society, increased the animosity against them. Furthermore, there was the virulent Nazi propaganda which falsely escalated public feelings against the Jews, and that Adolf Hitler was a muck-raking politician who never could have taken over the government except under abnormal conditions. And finally, it was generally believed that the extremism of the Nazis would have been replaced by moderation, that Hitler's pronouncements were mainly political rhetoric which could never have become a reality in Germany, and that the German people generally knew nothing about the extermination of the Jews by Hitler's rabid Nazis.

In spite of the above, it is indisputable that Adolf Hitler could never have become Chancellor had anti-Semitism not existed to the excessive degree which prevailed in Germany. It has also been suggested that had Hitler enlisted the support of Germany's Jews and their many talents, particularly in such scientific fields as atomic energy, the consequences of the war could have been greatly altered. But without racial hatred, the demonic Fuehrer would never have succeeded in overthrowing the government, there would not have been a war of aggression against Germany's neighbors, and there would have been no Holocaust. The World Refugee Board did play a vital role in saving about 200,000 Jews, but if it had been created only a year earlier, with able Christian and Jewish leadership that were authorized to develop public support, unquestionably, hundreds of thousands of additional Jewish lives could have been saved. The conclusion is inescapable. The prejudice of the German people alone was responsible for the Holocaust for which there can be no excuse under any circumstances. As German official Otto Lambsdorff would say in the year 2001, "we have sought to bring about financial closure of this darkest chapter of our history...There can never be moral closure."

Certainly the Holocaust could have been at least substantially modified had the nations of the world granted refuge to the European Jews before the war when the Nazis favored emigration as a solution to the "Jewish question." Undoubtedly,

many of the eventual victims could have been saved had the non-Axis nations of the world exerted greater pressure upon Hitler and the Nazis threatening retribution if persecutions were not terminated. Above all, there can be no excuse for the failure of the United States and Great Britain to have done what it was in their power to do to help save the Jews of Europe. The greatest blame, however, for the most inhumane blunder of World War II, must be placed upon Franklin Roosevelt who alone possessed the influence and the opportunity to have successfully mobilized world influence and action under the leadership of the world's greatest economic and military power, not only to offer refuge, but to threaten retaliation against the Germans on behalf of the Jews of Europe. But instead of meeting his moral responsibility to provide assistance and refuge for millions of desperate human beings who faced extinction, he intentionally avoided the issue and, instead, directed his administration to resist public pressures for initiatives by the government, particularly, regarding any attempt to meet existing quotas, to simplify restrictive procedures, and to increase quotas. Indeed, with his knowledge and approval, actual obstacles were erected by his personal associates to prevent even authorized numbers of refugees from Germany to enter the United States.

Furthermore, the Roosevelt government even failed to organize an international statement of conscience attesting to worldwide abhorrence to the killing of the Jews, and to cite punishment for the criminal perpetrators of the Holocaust, at a time when it may have forced some restraint upon the Nazis. The President's generally heavy involvement in foreign affairs at that time indicates that he was "Unwilling to throw his weight into the balance...No risks, no commitments, was the motto of the White House," reports James MacGregor Burns. The President was ambivalent, Arthur Morse says, and by his lack of courage to demonstrate political leadership on the issue, "he helped to doom European Jewry by inaction even as he proclaimed America as the asylum of the oppressed." Ted Morgan claims that FDR shunned the issue since an influx of Jewish refugees would only make his relations with the isolationists even more difficult. But most historians, many as great admirers of the President's wartime leadership, are silent on his failure of action on behalf of the fate of Europe's Jews.

In political terms, as well as under humanitarian considerations, it was a blunder of the greatest magnitude when Franklin D. Roosevelt failed to undertake

such actions as might have saved a high percentage of the European Jews who would become victims of the Holocaust. In unquestionably the greatest tragedy of World War II, Roosevelt and his administration permitted what they considered to be negative domestic political considerations to prevent the application of the decisive moral and political leadership and action of the United States government to mobilize world support and pressure which could have saved most of the Jews of the Holocaust. It is difficult to understand how the great American "liberal" President intentionally refused to effectively respond to the desperate threat to the lives of millions of innocent human beings? Why did he ignore the appeals of the American Jewish community which had given him such strong financial and political support? Could it have been his unjustified belief that there was so much anti-Semitism in America that it could not be overcome? Was the President afraid that it was so controversial it might cause him to lose his bid for re-election, or did he fear that it might distract from the pursuit of his policy of unconditional surrender and postwar international cooperation for peace? Arthur Morse claimed that since Roosevelt "was afraid that the Jewish issue was a political liability, he helped to doom European Jewry by inaction even as he proclaimed America as the asylum of the oppressed."

The Holocaust involved the most heinous crimes ever committed by man against man for which Germany must forever bear the responsibility and the shame. Even Hans Frank, the notorious Nazi head of the General Government in Poland, admitted at the war criminal trials at Nuremberg that "A thousand years will pass and the guilt of Germany will never be released." Still, at least, great numbers of the Jews of Europe could have been saved had the Western world not abandoned them to their horrible fate for which, clearly, the United States and, to a lesser degree Great Britain, must bear the major responsibility. Franklin Roosevelt and his administration chose to ignore the fact that the survival of a civilized and democratic society requires that every citizen accepts the moral responsibility to do what he can to advance the welfare of his fellowman.

Mankind must never forget that the largest and most horrible mass murder of human beings in history will stand forever as an eternal condemnation of racial prejudice and aggressive nationalism!

Chapter 17

The War With Japan

One of the world's greatest tragedies is that the war between Japan and the United States in 1941-45 could have been avoided had inexcusable blunders not been committed by both sides. The war between the Allies and Germany, on the other hand, was inevitable since it had become clearly necessary to rid the world of an aggressive fanatic Nazi dictator who was committed to world conquest. But the war with Japan could have been averted even though the protagonists had been long set on a collision course which greatly limited alternatives other than armed conflict. Neither Japan nor the United States wanted war, and both sought to avoid it, but fatal blunders by the Japanese and the Americans in their relations prior to the war brought on a conflict which should not have occurred. Unfortunately, great disparities in their political and economic objectives, immense cultural differences, emotional nationalism, policy rigidity, and outright prejudice obstructed rational relations and doomed all efforts to avoid one of history's greatest catastrophes.

Fundamentally, the war with Germany was a struggle against aggressive evil and, while the war in the Pacific involved Japanese aggression against its neighbors, it was a war which very well might not have occurred had pervasive blunders not preserved what proved to be massive obstacles to understanding and compromise. The Japanese and the Americans grossly misjudged each other, failed miserably to appreciate the other's vital interests, unnecessarily committed themselves to objectives which in no way justified the risk of war, and committed mistakes and errors which caused military confrontation to become inevitable. Unquestionably, more blunders took place in the pre-war relations between Japan and the United States than in any other phase of World War II. And it has been defined as a tragedy of "fractured communication and bungled diplomacy"

which resulted in a vast and horrible waste of humanity and material resources in addition to inestimable suffering and widespread destruction.

The pre-war conflict of interests between the United States and Japan had been building-up since the expansion of the Japanese Empire became the major thrust of Japan's foreign policy following victory in the Sino-Japanese War of 1895. Then Japan became convinced that her first task in empire-building was to overcome the obstruction of the larger, rival nations to what many Japanese believed to be their country's highest destiny—becoming the dominant power in the East. As a new and rapidly developing industrial nation which had to import its raw materials, they believed it was necessary for them to acquire the resources of the countries of Southeast Asia by military domination which would also provide a vast market for their products. But their most obvious problem involved the elimination of the expected obstruction and probable military resistance of the larger more powerful nations, particularly the United States and Great Britain.

During the Great Depression of 1929, Japan's overseas markets were generally destroyed and the Japanese believed that expansion through military conquest was essential to their economic survival. Civilian ultra-nationalists opposed parliamentary procedure as being un-Japanese and many leaders distrusted party government. Thus by the time its confrontation with the United States began, Japan had become so committed toward its aggressive territorial goals in Manchuria and China that the abandonment of its conquests, gained at the cost of 160,000 Japanese lives, would be considered a "loss of face" which was unacceptable to a nation proud of its historic military achievements. At the same time, the United States could not abandon its well-established role as a champion of China's national integrity, the right of the peoples of Southeast Asia to resist aggression, and the protection of America's interests in the Philippines against Japanese expansion. Clearly, Japan's major problem was how to continue to protect and increase her territorial gains without provoking or becoming involved in a war with more powerful nations—a war which Japan realized it probably could not win.

On September 18, 1931 the "Manchurian Incident" had launched Japanese aggression in East Asia. Undoubtedly, a false set-up by the Japanese Kwantung Army enabled them to charge that Chinese soldiers had tried to bomb a South Manchurian railway train. That gave the Japanese the excuse to capture Mukden and, together with two more northern provinces, the puppet State of

Manchukuo was formed followed by the Japanese occupation of Manchuria. The Japanese Army next moved into North China, then into the Yangtze Valley after which they became engaged in war by air, sea and land against all of China as far as the distant mountains of Szechuen. Claiming they were fighting to save Asia from the white man and to protect China from Communism, there was little foreign reaction until the Imperial Army raped and massacred more than 200,000 people in Nanking, creating a worldwide outrage against the Japanese.

It soon became clear that the foreign policy interests of the United States and Japan were on a direct collision course. The Japanese had decided that, like the United States and Britain, they were entitled to acquire colonies and possessions and become a world power by conquest. But the United States had become both morally and politically committed to the independence of sovereign states in principle, and specifically against aggression and conquest by Japan. As early as 1931, America had refused to recognize the Japanese conquest of Manchuria which proved to be the turning point for Japanese-American relations, as well as for the history of Asia. Japan's civilian government claimed it could not restrain its army, and by 1933, the League of Nations censured Japan for aggression and she withdrew from the League.

As the most industrially advanced country outside of North America and Europe, Japan had never known military defeat during her modern history and considered herself to be invincible. But she needed oil to succeed with her conquests for she had built a powerful Navy with ships even newer and better than those of the United States, Britain and Holland combined that were stationed in the Pacific, and her superiority in aircraft carriers was 10 to 3. They were also more advanced in the development of amphibious tactics arising from their position as an island-based power and, although their merchant marine support was small and would prove to be inadequate for their widespread and ambitious actions in the Southeast Pacific, the superior performance of their landing craft provided a substantial advantage. On the other hand, her major potential enemy held the great advantage of a vast superiority of resources as well as the highly important benefit of having broken Japan's secret communication code.

Nonetheless, Japan felt that her time was running out as she hoped that she could successfully strike south and occupy most of Southeast Asia before the Americans could create any effective resistance. Then once she had possession of

the area, she could then negotiate an acceptable settlement to end the conflict with the United States. Naval Chief Osami Nagano had advised the Emperor that Japan's oil supplies would permit her to fight a war for not more than eighteen months and that they could win only by taking the initiative without delay. Thus, following the German's spectacular "Blitzkrieg" victory over France and the Lowlands together with the expectation that Britain would soon be defeated, Japan saw an irresistible opportunity to grab the British and Dutch possessions and to make a reality of her dream of a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." Their troops were quickly moved into Indo-China which placed them within striking distance of the rubber of Malaya and the oil of the Dutch East Indies. Other objectives, such as Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands that were included in their "Co-Prosperity Sphere," were threatened. India, Arabia, and even California, were named as part of Japan's future "sphere" by the Japanese army newspaper. Consequently, US Secretary of State Cordell Hull immediately convinced President Franklin Roosevelt to retaliate by placing an embargo on oil sales to Japan and to freeze all Japanese assets in America. The Japanese, however, claimed their forces had entered Indo-China legally since permission had been negotiated with Vichy France in accordance with international law. The State Department, however, claimed that it showed the new partnership between Hitler and Japan was aimed at "dividing the world between them." After the war Imperial papers revealed that had been Japan's goal only for World War II, and that later Hitler and his part of the world would be dealt with by Japan in World War III!

For some time the Japanese had feared the possibility of a two-front war with Russia on one side and the Americans and the British on the other. Then suddenly, after the British miraculously got the best of Germany in the Battle of Britain, Hitler decided to eliminate his fear of a Soviet attack on his rear and, in spite of his non-aggression pact with Stalin, Germany attacked Russia on June 22, 1941 which carried the Nazi forces to the outskirts of Moscow. With the Soviets fully occupied in a desperate and losing struggle with the Germans and with Britain standing defeated and alone, the Japanese decided the time was right to strike for their aims of Empire in the Pacific. Only the United States, still officially a non-belligerent in Europe, remained as a major power to effectively contest Japan's aggressive ambitions.

Especially in Asia, military conquest had been the centuries-old method for expansion which had rarely been challenged. Anticipating the vast treasures of Southeast Asia, and unique to the Japanese armed forces, the military claimed 'the right of supreme command,' making the chiefs of the military general staffs independent of the government and directly responsible to the Emperor in matters vital to the national defense. Furthermore, on the premise that Japan was a small, over-populated country with almost no natural resources, surrounded by Russia, China, America and Britain as her "enemies," the Japanese military strengthened its control over the government with the adoption of a mobilization law in 1938 which removed parliamentary control over war measures and directed national law toward a concentrated and efficient war economy. By 1940 all political parties had been merged into one central organization which provided for the totalitarian control of the state as in Germany. Thus Japan's aggressive, militant goals and policies were assumed by General Hideki Tojo, strongman of the Imperial Army and one of the chief architects of Japanese war aims. Once named Prime Minister, War Minister and Home Minister, he became, in effect, a militant dictator and Japan's tragic fate was determined.

Despite efforts after the war to distance the Emperor from the war-making process, Hirohito was very much involved in the shaping of the catastrophe which befell Japan and Southeast Asia. It is now known that the Emperor played an active role in the development of Japan's war policies and he approved the planning of every important aspect of operations including the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. Furthermore, while custom directed an indirect, passive role involving the influence of approval rather than one of direction, the role of the Emperor in the final peace-making process demonstrated that it had clearly been within his power to have exerted a greater influence for moderation which might have prevented the war itself. It should have been apparent to Japan's leaders, much more so the Emperor, that there was no way that a small country like Japan could out-produce and out-fight such a powerful country as the United States. It was a blunder of colossal magnitude and the failure of the Emperor to intervene in the military control of Japan in the best interest of the preservation of the "national essence" was an unforgivable failure of authority which resulted in the death of millions of human beings with great destruction and suffering throughout most of Asia.

Unfortunately, the committed internationalist Franklin Roosevelt generally conducted American foreign affairs without consultation with his Department of State and he held his own firm convictions regarding relations with the Japanese and the problems of Southeast Asia. Most Americans, however, were opposed to any involvement in the spread of war in Europe and in Asia and they had intensified their demand that the United States stay out of war at all costs. Roosevelt, being very sympathetic with the ordeal of Britain and vigorously opposed to Hitler's aggressions, clearly wished to do everything he could to help both Britain and Russia. While accusations were made that he sought to use Japanese aggression as an excuse for entering the war against Germany and Japan, no convincing evidence exists that he wished to do more than take all steps short of war to defeat the aggressive dictators of Germany, Italy and Japan.

Intensive diplomatic efforts to avoid the oncoming possibility of an armed conflict began when two American priests met with Japanese officials in Tokyo and gave President Roosevelt a memorandum outlining what they believed would serve as a basis for negotiations which would avoid a war with Japan. But Cordell Hull, on the advice of State's China specialist Dr. Stanley Hornbeck, informed the President that Japan was not likely to agree to negotiate on any basis which would be acceptable to the United States. FDR, however, encouraged the priests to continue their efforts for peace which resulted in a "Draft Understanding" prepared in consultation with two "unofficial" Japanese diplomats. The draft included a pledge by the Japanese to withdraw their troops from China, to renounce their claim to any part of China provided China recognized the Japanese government in Manchuria, and that the governments of Chiang Kai-shek and his rival Wang Chingwei, considered in some circles to be a Japanese puppet, would be merged into a single Chinese government.

Secretary Hull and the State Department held that the draft favored Japanese imperialism and although part of it was acceptable and that modifications might be possible, they concluded the "understanding" could not be a basis for serious negotiations. However, Hull committed a critical blunder by not making his position clearly understood by the Japanese who assumed from his remarks that the document would be favorably considered by the United States. Shortly afterwards, Hull presented the diplomats with a statement of four principles which should be the basis of negotiations between Japan and the United States:

sovereignty and territorial integrity for all nations, noninterference in the internal affairs of other countries, equality including commercial opportunity, and nondisturbance of the peaceful states of the Pacific area.

Author John Toland contends that America made "a grave diplomatic blunder" by permitting her questionable interest in China to become "the keystone of her foreign policy." He held that initially the major United States position had been to separate Japanese interests from those of Germany and to prevent Japan's aggression against the states of Southeast Asia. However, Toland adds that largely as a result of Dr. Hornbeck's opposition to any compromise with Japan, the United States began to push hard to get Japan to renounce the Tripartite Pact and to withdraw all her forces from China. In that way, war or peace clearly began to be based on issues that did not justify America becoming involved in a war with Japan which the American people sought to avoid.

Under these circumstances, diplomatic negotiations began in Washington and notes continued to be exchanged between Japan and the United States. In fact, the Japanese had even decided to accept the basic four principles Hull had suggested as conditions for better relations between Japan and the United States. But in yet another colossal blunder, the American transmission of the response was mistranslated (many Japanese believed intentionally), so as to make it appear as if the Japanese were avoiding commitment on any of Hull's four points. In fact, the Japanese had agreed to comply with the basic conditions of the American initiative. Also, Roosevelt's reaction was positive and he indicated he would meet with Prince Fumimaro Konoye to discuss further negotiations. But as reports of more aggressive Japanese troop movements in Southeast Asia were received, Hull and Hornbeck convinced the President not to talk in the absence of a prior agreement.

Another blunder of equal importance was then committed by the Japanese Ambassador at Washington who failed to send Hull's proposal to Tokyo. Thus the Japanese government continued to believe that the "Draft Understanding" would be acceptable to the United States. In fact, Prime Minister Prince Konoye convened an emergency meeting of military and government leaders which approved the draft in principle. Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka had insisted that the United States agree to remain neutral in the event of a war between Japan and Great Britain. Hull, of course, objected and when the Japanese informed the

United States it would accept the main conditions of the "Draft Understanding," Hull found that it violated some of America's "most basic principles." Unfortunately and tragically, as John Toland points out, each party had different beliefs and interests upon which "language difficulties, stubbornness, rigidity and confusion only made matters worse." As a result of America's code-breaking Operation MAGIC, Hull knew in advance much of what the Japanese were doing, but he was often poorly and partly informed. Moreover, his advisor Dr. Hornbeck was considered to be "a pro-China hardline moralist who disliked Japan."

Konoye had earnestly sought to work out a compromise but Foreign Minister Matsuoka continued to block progress and remained antagonistic towards the United States. And when his diplomatic messages were intercepted, Hull considered them to be unreasonable and belligerent. Obviously, Hull's objection of a draft which the Japanese had believed to be acceptable stunned Konoye and his government. Then they were shocked when the Secretary of State demanded that Japan renounce its tri-partite pact with Germany and Italy and that no Japanese troops be used to fight with the Chinese against the Communists. They could not, of course, understand why there had been such a sudden change by the Americans and the meetings in Washington were ended. The next day on June 22, 1941, the Nazi's invaded the Soviet Union.

In the belief that Germany would defeat the Soviets in a matter of weeks, Matsuoka urged that Japan should attack Russia in Siberia. He believed that if they did so quickly, the United States would not be prepared to intervene and he argued to "first strike north, then south." The military refused since they were afraid of the possibility of a two-front war with the United States, but their plans included a strike against Siberia if the Soviet Union fell by August 1941. As it turned out, the Foreign Minister's advice was correct. From Japan's standpoint, the Japanese military committed one of its greatest blunders of the war by failing to attack Russia. Had they done so, certainly the course of World War II would have been vastly changed. Germany would have certainly defeated the Soviet Union for without the transfer of Soviet troops from the front facing Japanese forces in the East, Moscow would have fallen, and the struggling Soviets would have been crushed by the onrushing forces of the dictators. After the conquest of the Soviet Union, Britain would have quickly fallen to the triumphant Nazis. And by the time the United States would have found itself strong enough to

contest such powerful foes, even with the atom bomb, the Axis would have been in control of most of the world. So again the fate of the worldwide struggle was determined by a stupendous blunder by the aggressors.

The fact was that the greed for the vast resources which were largely undefended in Southeast Asia could not be resisted by the Japanese, particularly at a time when their potential enemies were desperately involved in a struggle for survival in Europe and in Russia. But even though they now believed that the prospect for peace was hopeless, they agreed to continue to negotiate with the Americans while preparing to aggressively move against their southern neighbors. Soon the time came to strike and on July 2, 1941, the conference with the Emperor present approved the move south. Still the question remained—what to do about Hull's proposals?

When the United States learned that a new Japanese expedition had moved into Indo-China, FDR's compromise proposal was dropped and Hull proposed that if the Japanese would support Chiang Kai-shek in China, remove all troops from China and Indo-China, and withdraw from the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy, the United States would offer several economic benefits. And historians have said that Japan had made a great concession by agreeing, in principle, to pull all of her forces out of China, but that the US had unreasonably insisted that it be done "at once," which convinced the Japanese the issue could not be resolved by diplomatic negotiation. Therefore, when Japan indicated they could not agree to the unconditional withdrawal of their troops, nor support Chiang Kai-shek, Hull bluntly told them that was as far as the United States could go. That turned out to be another critical blunder for he failed to make it clear that withdrawal from Manchuria was not included in his reference to China. Thus another mistaken and tragic interpretation was made by the Japanese which led two great powers, both opposed to the aggressive expansion of Soviet Communism into the Far East, to destroy their last significant chance to avoid an awesome conflict which neither desired.

Still Konoye firmly believed that war between America and Japan would be disastrous and he planned to visit President Roosevelt to resolve the China question. He was convinced that both countries would make concessions to prevent a war which neither side wanted and the Japanese Army and Navy agreed with him. Konoye next proposed that he and the President meet at Honolulu. But

Hull convinced Roosevelt that it would be appeasement to do so and informed the Japanese government that militarists had taken over Japan who had accused the United States of encircling their country. At this, the Japanese military became furious and claimed the Americans were stalling to build up their military forces. While Roosevelt had favored additional efforts to avoid war with Japan, Hull had become convinced that only military force could stop Japanese expansion in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. On August 17 Roosevelt responded to Japan's peace initiatives by stating that if Japan would abandon its expansion in the South and accept peace in the Pacific, the United States would resume negotiations.

In the meantime, although they considered that the American demands were unreasonable, the Japanese military realized that war with the United States should be avoided and on August 28, Konoye again requested a meeting with Roosevelt. He advised that his proposal would include the withdrawal of all Japanese forces from Indo-China once the China problem was solved or a "just peace" was established in Southeast Asia, and that no further advances would be made into other countries. Most importantly, Japan agreed to comply with Hull's four principles.

Unfortunately, it was then that Roosevelt made a fatal blunder. He permitted Hull and Hornbeck to persuade him that a meeting with Konoye should not be held without an advance assurance that the conditions of the United States would be met. In effect, it was the same as saying, "I will not negotiate with you. But I will meet with you only if you accept my conditions in advance." That was neither negotiation nor diplomacy. If Franklin Roosevelt had asserted himself and overridden Hull, very possibly FDR and Konoye could have developed compromises which might have avoided the war, or at least a postponement so that the Japanese might have realized they could not win a war against such a vastly superior enemy. In any case, almost any alternative would have been more favorable than the disastrous consequences of a war which resulted in such terrible death, suffering and destruction for both sides. Moreover, it's consequences not only turned China, the world's most populous nation, over to the control of Communism but led directly to two of America's most disastrous and costly conflicts—Korea and Viet Nam. While there can be no doubt about Japan's vicious aggressions against its neighbors, it is understandable that the Japanese became convinced that compromises could not be negotiated with the United States, and

that the Americans were attempting to gain time to build up their forces to defeat Japan in the event of a war.

It was not until a few weeks before Japan's new peace deadline, that Hull responded to what Japan considered to be substantial concessions to avoid war, by saying that the United States would be pleased to have a conference and had found the acceptance of the four principles "gratifying." But, he added, Japan's proposals relating to China could not be accepted since the United States had insisted that all Japanese troops must be withdrawn without delay. Hull's rejection was, in effect, an ultimatum when it should have been obvious that the Japanese had gone as far as they believed they could go without losing face. As it should have been expected, Hull's proposal infuriated the Japanese. The major error that most complicated the negotiations was the fact that Hull's reference to an "all of China" proposal had been interpreted by the Japanese to mean that the United States was demanding that they get out of Manchuria as well, which was totally unacceptable to the Japanese (where substantial Japanese lives had been lost in fighting with the Chinese). Furthermore, they had already agreed in principle to withdraw from China. The only question that really remained to be resolved concerned when and whether 25,000 or 5,000 troops were to remain?

When President Roosevelt demanded that Japan withdraw from China and Indo-China, and froze all Japanese assets in the United States with an embargo on oil for Japan, the Japanese took it as an ultimatum and a final rupture became inevitable. Since 1931 the Japanese had known that an access to an overseas supply of oil was essential to their national existence. B.H. Liddel Hart considered Roosevelt's reactions to Japan's counter-proposals were unjustified and that "no government, least of all Japan, could be expected to swallow such humiliating conditions, and such 'lost of face.'" Liddel Hart also held that it was obvious that Japan considered oil vital for its existence and would fight for it, if necessary, and that war should have been expected for months before Pearl Harbor, yet both the United States and Britain remained almost totally unprepared.

Actually, America's relationships with the Chinese had created many difficulties for Roosevelt. The Chinese believed that the United States was negotiating with the Japanese at their expense and, due to such objections as well as Churchill's lukewarm attitude to his proposals, Roosevelt abandoned further initiatives for negotiations. Also, by this time, the Japanese codes had led the

Americans to believe that Japan was committed to war if the United States did not accept their compromises. After the war, however, an imprisoned Tojo said that if he had received Roosevelt's compromise, "the course of history would probably have been changed." The greatest of all their pre-war blunders involved the failure of both Japan and the United States to have exhausted every possibility of compromise and negotiation which might have prevented a war with such awesome consequences for Japan, the Allies and the people of Southeast Asia.

While even the Japanese military had eventually agreed to make concessions to the United States, Secretary Hull claimed that America had no choice but to reject the Japanese proposals. First, they knew that Konoye had been Prime Minister in 1939 when Japan invaded China and launched its crusade to "liberate" Asia from domination by the Western powers, and that the Japanese military was continuing to relentlessly pursue its expansionist ambitions in China and Indo-China. Furthermore, throughout the negotiations for peace it had been apparent that the changing proposals being presented by the Japanese continued to avoid making commitments on basic principles and issues. Simultaneously, intercepted messages to and from Tokyo had clearly indicated they had no intention of withdrawing from the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy, nor to give up their occupation of China and Indo-China. To the contrary, they were actively preparing to proceed with their plans to create their "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" by armed aggression throughout the Pacific area.

However, it is noted that Japan had already agreed in principle to the withdrawal "of all troops from China," but the Japanese military believed that the United States was insisting that all troops should be withdrawn "at once." Obviously, that would have been impossible with more than a million soldiers still fighting in China. Konoye, however, was convinced that only his meeting with Roosevelt could avoid the oncoming war and he continued to struggle with the militarists for concessions and negotiations. By August 28 messages were sent to Washington again requesting a meeting between Konoye and the President and agreeing to withdraw all forces from Indo-China once the China problem was settled, or a "just peace " had been agreed upon, and that Hull's basic four principles had been accepted. But, as Hull and Roosevelt continued to read MAGIC intercepts of military build-ups, it was impractical for them to believe in

the sincerity of the negotiations. Accordingly, Roosevelt was persuaded he should not meet with Konoye "without first arriving at a satisfactory agreement."

On October 5 Japan's military and bureau leaders concluded that diplomatic negotiations with the United States had been unsuccessful and they concluded that there was no course left to them but war. Clearly, it should have been obvious to the Americans that the Japanese were anxious to find a diplomatic solution. Even though there had been no response from Roosevelt about a meeting with Konoye, two additional proposals were hastily submitted by the Japanese stating that they would withdraw from Indo-China and accept Hull's four principles. They would also agree that there would be no more aggressive military actions in Southeast Asia and that their troops in China would withdraw once peace had been established. But Roosevelt and Hull were truly stalling for time to build-up the American military so their objections continued. As Konoye found himself facing the deadline of October 10, Roosevelt refused to set a date for a meeting. Finally, the new Foreign Minister Teijiro Toyoda made further modifications and proposed the peace terms Japan would offer China, promised no annexations nor indemnities, and that all Japanese troops would be withdrawn except those needed to help the Chinese defeat the Communists. Five weeks later a noncommittal American response was finally received.

The most grievous error by the Americans was their failure to make every possible effort to negotiate compromises which could have averted war. We now know that Japan was making a sincere effort to work out a practical arrangement to resolve the difficulties between the two states. However, Ambassador Joseph Grew from Tokyo had warned Roosevelt that Japan might strike the United States at any time and that traditionally in Japan "a national psychology of desperation develops into a determination to risk all." Also, the difficulties of communication and understanding continued to have a fateful effect upon US-Japanese relations. Since no one believed more than Franklin Roosevelt that politics is the art of the possible, obviously, he was stalling for time to rearm America and he had become convinced that war with Japan and Germany by the United States was inevitable. James MacGregor Burns concludes that he was "less a great creative leader than a skillful manipulator and a brilliant interpreter...he was always a superb tactician and sometimes a courageous leader, but he failed to achieve that combination of tactical skill and strategic planning that represents

the acme of political leadership." Nonetheless, the record clearly shows that Franklin Roosevelt and Cordell Hull, as well as the Japanese Emperor and the military leaders of Japan, must share much of the responsibility for a war which, in the final analysis, is said to have resulted in the substitution of the domination of Southeast Asia by Communism rather than by Japanese Imperialism.

Still Prince Konoye, the Japanese Navy and some of the Army leaders continued to favor negotiations. However, War Minister Tojo was adamantly against immediate and complete withdrawal from China which he believed would be seen by the United States as a defeat for Japan. On its peace deadline of October 15, the government continued to be locked in a struggle between civilian authorities and the military as to whether there was to be war or peace. Konoye and Privy Seal Koichi Kido sought to resolve the deadlock without war and realized a strong new Premier was needed who could control the military, had participated in the discussions, and could bring about a decision for peace. Unfortunately, only the War Minister Hideki Tojo qualified since he had been above politics and they did not believe he would press for war.

The Emperor also committed a disastrous blunder by his failure to assert his authority to force the government to take action to avoid a hopeless armed conflict. He should have been completely aware that he had the ultimate responsibility to lead the nation in its best interests and that Japan did not have the power nor the means to win a war with the United States and Great Britain. It should have been obvious that even if Japan's initial assaults in Southeast Asia turned out successfully, it would only be a matter of time before their opponents would acquire the men, ships and planes necessary to defeat and destroy much of Japan itself. Both Konoye and Kido had believed that the Emperor, who had repeatedly gone on record for peace even though there had been no direct interventions, would influence Tojo for peaceful negotiation. Thus when Tojo was made Premier by Hirohito he was directed to work for closer Army-Navy cooperation with the request to "go back to blank paper" to make a clean review of the initiatives for peace. Although that was an unprecedented intervention by a Japanese Emperor, it should have resulted in negotiations which might well have averted the catastrophe.

When the militant Tojo government took power the United States knew that it meant the Japanese would attack somewhere in the Pacific. The fact that the

US had broken the Japanese code, unfortunately, also had a fateful influence upon America's responses to Japanese efforts to avoid war. The Americans were convinced that Japan had decided to go to war to obtain the territory and the resources for its national survival. Although neither the Japanese nor the Americans wanted war and both had attempted to avoid it, each had their own essential national interests which, in this case, represented almost entirely different points of view that increasingly appeared could not be resolved without compromises. Adversely for the cause of peace, when Japan demonstrated a willingness to compromise, Hull, Hornbeck and Roosevelt insisted upon their "rigid moralistic conditions" which Japan could not accept without loss of face. Thus, even though they realized it was doubtful they could win a war against such a powerful enemy, they felt the death of thousands of their soldiers in China had to be justified. Although it was a war which they did not want, which they knew they could not win, the dispute had reached the point where the Japanese found it to be the "only honorable course" they believed they could take. So charged forth into the abyss of death and destruction the awesome fate of national pride!

Meanwhile, the question of the withdrawal of the troops from China had continued to divide the Japanese government. Togo, the new Foreign Minister, argued that withdrawal should be immediate and that the American proposals should be accepted. However, Premier Tojo suggested it might be possible to agree to withdraw over a period of twenty-five years, but Army Chief of Staff Sugiyama was opposed to any concessions. Finally, it was agreed that negotiations with the United States could continue until midnight November 30. Then most fortunately for the survival of Russia and the defeat of Hitler's Wehrmacht which was victoriously rushing towards Moscow, and in probably the most important intelligence coup of the war, Soviet spy Richard Sorge had notified Stalin on October 4 that the Japanese forces would be withdrawn from the Russian front in Manchuria for their attack on Southeast Asia. Incredibly, just at the most critical time for the survival of the Soviet Union against a pincer attack from the Germans and the Japanese, Stalin was suddenly enabled to transfer his substantial forces facing Japan to save Moscow.

With Togo's new responsibility to stop the war, he prepared two new proposals for the United States: Proposal A would agree that all troops would be

withdrawn from China by 1966; Proposal B (in case A was refused and as a last resort), would pledge no more aggression and, once there was peace with China, all troops in Indo-China would be withdrawn. In the meantime, all troops in Indo-China would be withdrawn to the north of that country and the United States would agree to release the sale of a million tons of aviation fuel. After lengthy discussions, the military finally concurred with Togo's initiatives. Although it remained doubtful that the United States would accept the proposals, surprisingly, Tojo indicated he would agree to further compromises if negotiations with the Americans would justify it. At least an agreement had been reached, at last, on Togo's two proposals.

But Proposal A brought no response from the United States, so on November 20 Proposal B was submitted to the Americans. However, Cordell Hull was furious over the proviso for no further aid from the US to China, and because of Japan's new Tripartite Agreement with Germany and Italy which committed the Japanese to world domination by the Axis powers. Roosevelt's reaction to Proposal B brought forth his "modus vivendi" which called for no more Japanese troops to be sent to Manchuria or to the south, an agreement not to invoke the Tripartite Pact, and the commencement of peace talks between China and Japan.

On November 4 a unanimous decision was obtained by Japan's civilian cabinet, the military leaders and the Emperor which approved their plans for an attack against the United States at Pearl Harbor, and to "Strike South" to occupy other countries in Southeast Asia, as well as key South Pacific islands, as defensive outposts. The decision also approved the commencement of hostilities against the United States, Great Britain, and The Netherlands to begin in early December with the proviso that "If negotiations with the United States are successful by the beginning of December, the use of force will be called off." From that moment, until the Pearl Harbor attack a month and three days later, the Emperor was deeply involved in every detail of Japan's war plans.

Then on the next day the Imperial Conference met with the Emperor. Togo reported that the chances for diplomatic success were discouraging. Others pointed out that the United States continued to make demands without any concessions. Generally, they believed that they had no alternative, that Japan was being forced to take action, and that if they did not take these actions the honor and the vital interests of the nation would be lost. They also believed that in Japan's defensive

interests, such actions would be both militarily and morally justified. Although he would continue to labor for peace, even the moderate Togo felt he had to agree that Japan would have to fight. The Emperor did not intervene.

Since the Japanese felt they were left with no choice, at least if they fought there would be a chance of winning. If they did not fight, however, the result would be the same as losing a war. And lastly, if they did nothing, they would become a third-class nation. By then the Japanese had become convinced that further negotiations were useless; that Roosevelt and Hull had backed them into a corner; and there was no alternative but war. Some critics contend that the United States permitted her concern for China, which was not an issue vital to America, to become the "keystone of her foreign policy" in the Far East, and that Hull had given the Japanese no choice but "capitulation or war." Finally, even the militant Tojo had exclaimed, "I'm praying to the gods that some way we'll come to an agreement with America."

But Hull and Hornbeck, of course, had seen the issues differently. Hull believed that Japanese expansionist plans in Southeast Asia violated international law, were a direct threat to the peace and security of the United States, and he insisted that so long as Japan refused to denounce the Tripartite Pact they were committed to join Hitler in the event of war with the United States. While Hull did not believe there was a chance of "one in a hundred" to avoid war, he says that he and the President were determined to pursue every possible effort to settle the entire Pacific question in peace. Thus intensive negotiations were undertaken over many months in which he and Roosevelt believed no compromise was possible regarding the principles of independence for China and the countries of Southeast Asia, continued American aid to Chiang Kai-shek, and the necessity to end the war in China with the withdrawal of Japanese troops from Indo-China and China. At the same time, Hull found some of the conditions were acceptable and that others could be modified. When Japan proposed a non-aggression pact, Hull concluded it would have prevented the United States from intervening with Japan's aggression in Southeast Asia.

Japan's proposals in May 1941 had formed the basis of the final negotiations which preceded the attack on the American fleet at Hawaii. Roosevelt and Hull, in spite of their belief there was no chance of separating Japan from Germany and Italy, had done what they thought they could to modify the Japanese

proposals in spite of Japan's assertions that peaceful means would be used for their initiatives in Southeast Asia, that she had invaded China because of Chinese threats, and had moved into Indo-China because of British, Chinese, and Free French threats. But Hull claimed that as soon as the United States would indicate it might accept some compromises, the Japanese invariably began to hedge or renege. Consequently Hull, who was reading secret Japanese communications throughout the negotiations, concluded the Japanese had no intention of withdrawing from the Tripartite Pact, of abandoning their plans for the conquest of Southeast Asia, nor of withdrawal from China. He believed their only compromises were designed to obtain American appeasement until the occupation of Southeast Asia had become a fact or, at least, would permit them to keep their gains in Manchuria and a military presence in China with which they could gain by other means the territory they wanted, and to defeat the Communists in China. When it was learned that Japanese forces were prepared to attack Malaya and Singapore from Indo-China, FDR and Hull were convinced that any hope for peace in the Pacific area was lost.

The final Japanese decision to attack the United States was based on the fact that Hitler had successfully conquered most of Europe and, as he neared Moscow itself, there was little danger that the Soviets would threaten Japan. They further believed that once their "quick strike" had gained control of most of the nations of Southeast Asia, their liberation from the "white man's oppression" would be welcomed, and the British and Americans would be forced to recognize the existence of the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." Since they possessed the most powerful fleet in the Pacific, they also believed that by one powerful thrust they would gain control of the South Pacific ocean area which would enable them to successfully defend against attacks by the United States, Britain and Holland.

When President Roosevelt learned on November 27 that a large expeditionary force was headed south out of Shanghai, a final alert was sent to General Douglas MacArthur in the Philippines and to General Walter C. Short at Hawaii warning that "hostile action possible at any moment." The Navy also sent war warnings to Admiral Thomas C. Hart in the Philippines and Admiral Husband E. Kimmel at Hawaii. The next day another warning was given about the southward expedition. Secretary of War Henry Stimson wanted the B-17's in the Philippines to bomb the ships but the President, not wishing to strike the first blow, vetoed the

suggestion. Instead, Roosevelt decided to send a personal peace message to the Emperor saying that continued aggression would mean war between Japan and the United States.

Several days later the American press translated poorly a speech by Tojo which was made excessively belligerent and greatly aroused Washington. By this time the Japanese had seen little chance for peace and were purposely stringing out their diplomacy to mask their secret aggressions. By December 1, the Imperial Conference would meet for the final approval of the Emperor before their first aggressive strike. They decided they could not accept the American demands which were considered to be an ultimatum for Japan to get out of China and to withdraw from the Tripartite Pact. In their belief, to do so would deny the future existence of the Japanese people. Their final decision was that they had no choice but to defend what they considered to be the vital interests of the Japanese Empire against the United States, Britain and the Netherlands. Furthermore, the Emperor had considered Hull's demands to be "humiliating," he believed he had done all that he could and there was nothing else to do but officially ratify the decision for war. The next day the Emperor approved the attack on Pearl Harbor.

From intercepted messages American officials knew that the Japanese planned a surprise attack in the Southwest Pacific area which would probably include the Philippines. The US had expected that by 1942, in the event of a war, the small American-Phillipine force on Luzon plus 100 bomber aircraft, three cruisers, thirteen destroyers, twenty-nine submarines and thirty-two flying boats should be able to hold out long enough to be reinforced. The British also planned to be stronger in 1942 since they expected the Japanese to move southwest from China and Indochina towards Malaysia, Singapore and Burma, and eventually to India where they would join the Nazi advance from North Africa. But the fact was that in late 1941, American defensive resources in the Philippines were capable of little more than delaying tactics. Furthermore, only limited British forces were available to protect their colonies in Southeast Asia which included only two battleships, three cruisers, six destroyers and 158 aircraft. And in the Netherlands East Indies, the Dutch had only a small armed force with three light cruisers, seven destroyers, thirteen submarines and 140 aircraft.

It was known in Washington that the Philippines would be a primary target in the event of a war with Japan and substantial efforts had been made to buildup

an effective defense. Since the President's oil embargo it had been obvious that the Japanese would go after the oil resources of Indonesia to maintain their armed forces. Therefore, the Japanese would have to establish bases in Borneo and the Celebes and the American forces in the Philippines and the British forces in Malaya and Singapore would have to be eliminated. The Japanese would also likely set-up defensive positions as far as Burma to the west, down as far as New Guinea, and as far out as the Solomons to the east. With at least thirty divisions and 750 aircraft tied-down in Manchuria, China, Korea and Japan for defensive purposes, only forty-one divisions and 1,500 aircraft would be available for their excessive plans to conquer all of Southeast Asia. While it could be expected that their initial land assaults would be successful, it was a stupendous blunder and totally unrealistic to believe they would have any chance whatsoever that their combined naval forces of ten battleships, nine carriers, 200 cruisers, destroyers and submarines with 1,000 aircraft would be able to defeat the two most powerful navies in the world.

As December 7 approached, the US intercepted numerous messages that indicated that the Japanese would soon strike with their military forces which should have resulted in the immediate institution of strong defensive measures by the military at Hawaii, as well as in the Philippines. One message actually requested information on ship movements and defenses at Hawaii and, on December 2, MAGIC intercepted a message which made the intended attack on Hawaii unmistakably clear. Still, inexplicably, it was not considered to deserve a high priority and by the time it was translated and distributed, it was too late. Furthermore, the American military had assumed all along that the Philippines were the major American outpost in the Pacific and would be the obvious target for Japan's first attack since it was known that troop convoys were headed south. Their inability to identify the location of the unaccounted for Japanese fleet can be understood, but the failure to consider even the unlikely possibility of an attack on Hawaii was unforgivable. And for that, the ultimate blunder was clearly the responsibility of the American military and its Commander-in-Chief.

In Washington on December 3, the Japanese Ambassador even remarked that the Japanese people and the Emperor wanted peace but its military leaders were determined to make war. He believed that if he could meet with President Roosevelt, without the presence of the "hostile and untrusting" Cordell Hull,

and convince him to make a direct plea to the Emperor, the President would be asked to mediate between China and Japan which would avert war. American missionary E. Stanley Jones convinced the President to make such an initiative which FDR agreed to do immediately, but Hull argued that he should do so only if diplomatic efforts failed. Unfortunately, little time remained for the cause of peace when it was discovered that the Japanese Embassy at Wahington had been instructed to burn its codes, and it was concluded that war was imminent. Foreign Minister Togo was convinced that the unjustified rigidity by the Americans had prevented the negotiation of a peaceful settlement.

The US intercepted another message on December 5 which gave Japan the latest report on the ships at Pearl Harbor. Inconceivably, it also was placed on "hold." Thus, as Roosevelt made a final appeal to Hirohito for a settlement and negotiations for peace were being strung out by both sides to gain time, Japanese submarines and carriers secretly moved toward Pearl Harbor. Roosevelt knew there would be an attack in the "South Pacific," and preparations were made to defend the Philippines, Malaya and the Dutch East Indies. But the Americans did not know that the Japanese were planning to simultaneously attack Hong Kong, Malaya, the Philippines, and Pearl Harbor. Actually, it appears that no one even seriously considered the possibility that such a small country as Japan could possess the capability to attack Pearl Harbor. In retrospect, it was an incredible blunder by both the political and the military leaders of the United States!

In the meantime, the Emperor had requested the "blank paper" reexamination of the war decision and might have been receptive to an initiative by the President. In any event, it would have been too late for the Emperor to change the extensive military preparations and the emotional commitments which were already too intense and widespread to be easily overcome. Prime Minister Tojo held that the unanimous decision of the Cabinet and the Supreme Command should not be changed, that 160,000 Japanese lives had been lost in China and that, if more time was lost, Japan would be unable to fight. By then even the moderate Foreign Minister Togo was forced to conclude that nothing further could be done and that diplomacy could only be used to "facilitate operations." The fact was that official attitudes and preliminary operations had proceeded to the point where war had become inevitable. As happens too often in the negotiation of national disputes, once the position of the adversaries becomes fixed,

and it is believed that no further compromise can be made without loss of an essential national interest, then either capitulation or the resort to force becomes the only unfortunate alternative.

After the war Hirohito would claim that he had done everything he could to avoid the conflict pointing out that the constitution prevented the Emperor from free speech, as well as willful interference in a minister's authority, thus he had been required to approve all decisions reached by lawful procedures even those he might otherwise have considered to be "undesirable." He also claimed not to have known of the planned attack on Pearl Harbor even though the record indicates that he not only knew of it—he approved it. In fact, it is well documented in numerous published works by David Bergamini and others which clearly show that Hirohito took an active leading role concerning all of Japan's military ventures both before and during the war.

We now know that Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto was influenced by a book published in 1925 by British author Hector C. Bywater who predicted that war between the United States and Japan would begin with a sneak attack on American ships off the coast of the Philippines. While the details were different, the purpose was similar—to destroy the American fleet by a surprise attack. Yamamoto realized that such a daring assault would be unexpected, probably successful, and would give Japan its only chance of a crippling blow against a superior and powerful enemy. The Japanese had also noted the British success with air-launched torpedoes against the Italian fleet at Taranto in 1940 and conceived the novel idea of using such tactics for the shallow waters of Pearl Harbor. On 26 November 1941 an attack force consisting of six large, fast carriers loaded with torpedo bombers, high-level bombers, and dive bombers sailed from the Kurile Islands secretly headed for a launching area 275 miles north of Hawaii.

The success of such an attack was based on the presence of the anchored American fleet at Peal Harbor and that the Japanese task force would be able to move to within range of Hawaii without being detected. It was agreed that up to the time of the attack the action would be called off if diplomatic initiatives succeeded. In the meantime MAGIC had picked up the controversial "winds" message which would be used to signal Japan's Washington embassy on the termination of diplomatic relations and the destruction of all code documents. Continuous monitoring of Japanese transmissions had been invoked but, in

another inexcusable blunder, no arrangements had been made for the immediate delivery of interceptions which would have given an advance warning of an attack on Pearl Harbor. Incomprehensibly, at the time of the attack, these warnings lay buried unnoticed among the bureaucracy of the American naval intelligence.

On Sunday December 7, 1941 at dawn 353 Japanese planes suddenly and without warning attacked the unprepared and undefended ships, airfields, and military bases in Hawaii. As a result of a series of some of the greatest blunders of World War II, Japan's pilots were flabbergasted to find that the American Pacific fleet lay fully exposed beneath them and that their attacks had been unexpected and were largely unopposed. Even the radar watch at Pearl Harbor had been closed down and, unbelievably, when another radar detected the oncoming aircraft at a distance of 180 miles, the warning was still ignored. Each of the eight battleships sitting in a row, and ten other warships and auxiliaries, was either sunk or crippled, 80% of the military aircraft were destroyed, 2,388 Americans were killed and 1,178 were wounded, and vast damages to installations and equipment were suffered. Providentially, three invaluable aircraft carriers and one battleship were at sea and escaped the attack. While American blunders had provided Japan with a miraculous opportunity for a crippling strike against its powerful adversary, it was also Japan's greatest blunder of World War II for it began a war which the Japanese had no chance of winning, and it "aroused, unified and mobilized" the American response to an unwanted war as nothing else could have done.

Strategically, the Japanese strike was considered to have been a brilliant success. It had seriously crippled and almost put out of action the US fleet at Hawaii which eliminated all effective interference with their major goals of aggression in the Southwest Pacific. Still, their attack included several critical blunders. The all-important American aircraft carriers remained untouched and no effort was made to find and destroy them. A third attack was not employed which would have immobilized the American fleet by destroying the all-important oil storage supplies and naval support facilities. In fact, after a totally successful and practically unopposed assault, the operation was suddenly called-off, and according to Harry Albright, "it was a disgraceful retreat in the face of victory." In reality, aside from the heavy loss of life and ships involved, the attack turned out to be of some benefit to the American prosecution of the war. The American navy was forced to revise the use of the battleship and the important task of the carrier attack force

evolved which made possible the early defeat of the Japanese navy and brought victory to the United States and the British Commonwealth. Furthermore, the damaged battleships were quickly repaired and replaced as powerful weapons against the Japanese navy. While the attacks against the Philippines and in Southeast Asia led to the quick Japanese occupation of their initial objectives, the resources of the Allies once mobilized were far too great to permit anything but temporary success for the armed forces of Nippon.

Still there can be no excuse for the lengthy series of omissions, over-sights, errors, mistakes, and blunders by both American political leaders and military officials which combined to present the Japanese with one of the most effective assaults in military history. After years of investigation and speculation regarding the responsibility for the Pearl Harbor tragedy, it is incontestably true that many persons in the highest positions of the government and the military failed to exercise the degree of caution, contingency-planning, and preparation for the unexpected which it had been their duty to provide the American people. And the failures of preparedness were common at all levels of command in spite of numerous specific warnings to expect a surprise attack which were generally ignored. Almost everyone, it appears, assumed that the first strike would be logically directed at the Philippines and literally no one, in spite of several warnings, seriously considered the possibility that it might also occur at Hawaii. Actually, the American liner *Lurline* and navy communications at San Francisco had picked up radio signals coming from a large Japanese naval force north-northwest of Hawaii, and from the East Indies, the Dutch reported that attacks would be made on Hawaii as well as at Malaya, the Philippines, and Siam. Authors Charles A. Beard, John T. Flynn, Harry Barnes and others have charged Roosevelt with complicity in bringing about a war with Japan and Germany. While Roosevelt, like the overwhelming majority of Americans, sympathized with the plight of Britain and Russia and wished to render all possible aid short of war, it is inconceivable that he would have intentionally sacrificed America's limited resources of men, planes, and ships, not only because it would have been unconscionable, but there would have been no reason to do so. If Japan had been willingly permitted or manipulated into a first strike, certainly American forces would not have been totally unprepared to defend themselves and to make an effective counterstroke.

Many questions, however, remain unresolved such as Secretary Stimson's report in his diary on November 26 that FDR was concerned about a Japanese surprise attack by December 1, and questioned how to get them "to fire the first shot without too much danger to ourselves." It is also known that Ambassador Joseph C. Grew warned Roosevelt from Tokyo as early as January 1941 that the Japanese were planning a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in the event of war. No acceptable explanations have been revealed explaining the many ignored intercepted messages such as those requesting information on the movement and location of all ships in the harbor, the division of the harbor into five areas undoubtedly indicating a bombing grid system, the presence of torpedo nets and barrage balloons, the status of air reconnaissance, instructions on destroying documents, and requesting other information about the area. In fact, one response to Tokyo concluded that "in all probability there is considerable opportunity left to take advantage for a surprise attack against these places."

It remains difficult to understand how so much information could have been mishandled, misinterpreted, and ignored at Washington except as a consequence of incompetence or intention. In what has to be one of the greatest blunders of the war, neither Roosevelt, Marshall, Stimson or Frank Knox, Secretary of the Navy, nor any other Washington official took the necessary precautionary steps to assure that the Army and the Navy would invoke adequate defensive measures to protect the military resources and personnel of the United States in Hawaii in the face of the known threat of aggressive military action by the Japanese. It is inconceivable that neither Admiral Husband Kimmel nor General Walter Short, who were directly responsible for the safety of America's military forces, equipment, and installations in Hawaii, were not informed of the nature of the many warnings received at Washington, and that they were made to be the scapegoats for the disaster by Franklin Roosevelt and his military officials.

The causes of the success of the crippling surprise attack on Pearl Harbor created the most controversial dispute within the United States government during World War II. Even to this day charges persist that Franklin Roosevelt deliberately manipulated the Pearl Harbor incident in order to bring America into the war to aid Great Britain's and Russia's desperate struggle for survival. But such charges remain unsubstantiated. It is, however, well established that the foremost duty of the military commander is to be prepared. His basic responsibility is to

be ever vigilant and to anticipate every possible action by the enemy. A battle can seldom be won by surprise unless the commander has failed to meet his most important responsibility—the effective defense of his command. Franklin Roosevelt, as Commander-in-Chief, and General George Marshall and Admiral Harold R. Stark as top commanders of the army and the navy, were ultimately responsible for the most inexcusable debacle in American military history.

Shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, invasions were also launched in the Philippines and the Malay Peninsula. Hong Kong was taken on Christmas Day, Borneo and Celebes were invaded on January 11, 1942, and Java was taken in March. Instead of driving on towards Australia, the main Japanese advance was directed from Thailand where there had been no opposition, towards Burma and ultimately India itself. Also following the attack at Hawaii, a small Japanese force of 450 men attempted to land on Wake Island but were gallantly held off by a handful of heroic Americans. On December 23 a stronger attacking force with four heavy cruisers and 2,000 men returned to Wake and quickly overcame the valiant defenders. But considerable controversy involved the American navy's failure to relieve the island before the second attack. Admiral Frank Fletcher, who was still 600 miles at sea when the attack occurred, was believed to have failed to use "sufficient vigor" en route to Wake. Samuel Eliot Morison complained that "the failure to relieve Wake resulted from poor seamanship and a want of decisive action." The capture of both Wake and Guam proved to be of much importance to the Japanese for it gave them a lifeline in support of their successful occupation of much of Southeast Asia, and established control of the Central Pacific from which they could launch their attacks to set-up effective defensive barriers on the outlying islands of the South Pacific.

Before the war General MacArthur had been brought out of retirement and given command of the "US Forces, Far East" in the Philippines. His forces consisted of the modest Philippine-American troops in the islands and 277 airplanes which was the largest number of aircraft outside the United States. Although warnings of the possibility of attacks by the Japanese had been issued for some time, MacArthur was informed of the attack on Pearl Harbor eight hours before the Japanese struck the beaches of Luzon. Yet, in another ridiculous blunder, half of his American aircraft were destroyed on the ground so that when the Japanese came ashore there was little opposition from the air. Not only were

the Japanese aircraft found to be more numerous and faster with greater ranges, their pilots were also better trained and experienced. And the blunders continued as the twenty-nine American submarines of the Pacific fleet, which were expected to be the major defensive weapon against an invasion of the Philippines, were not even employed against the eight different landings on Luzon. They were situated ineffectively, manned by undertrained crews that were inexperienced and overly cautious, and most disastrously, their torpedoes were defective.

For years it was expected that in the event of war with Japan the Philippines would be a primary target since it was the largest American force in Southeast Asia. Even though MacArthur had five divisions in Northern Luzon consisting of 100,000 men, the poorly trained and lightly equipped Filipinos offered little resistance to the 43,000 invading Japanese, and the American 26th Cavalry was barely able to cover their retreat. Realizing any hope of an effective resistance north of Manila was impossible, MacArthur declared Manila an "open city" on December 24, and moved his headquarters to Corregidor. He then directed his forces to withdraw onto the Bataan peninsula hoping to hold on there until reinforcements could arrive from the United States. The invaders, however, committed a great error for had they pressed the retreat more vigorously the Philippine-American forces could have been destroyed. Actually the invasion was poorly handled and the Japanese forces were totally unprepared to assault Bataan having expected the main defense to be at Manila. MacArthur, however, was strongly criticized not only for the bungled loss of his aircraft, but for not having previously moved supplies and equipment forward to fight the Japanese on the beaches of Luzon, which might have eliminated the grievous suffering on Bataan from lack of supplies. He also made the mistake of publicly saying that he could hold Bataan for several months until the reinforcements he had been promised could arrive from the United States, when he knew that the pre-war defensive ORANGE plan had recognized that the Philippines could not be held long enough to be reinforced.

When the Japanese occupied Manila on January 2, they expected MacArthur to quickly evacuate his troops from Bataan to Corregidor, but by January 26 the Philippine and American troops were still holding out on Bataan. Apparently, in an effort to bolster morale, MacArthur sent a message to Bataan that "thousands of troops and hundreds of planes" were on their way from the United States.

Subsequently, he was bitterly attacked for giving false hope in spite of the fact that General Marshall and the navy had led him to expect help. In reality, however, Washington knew it would be impossible to relieve the situation. Actually, if the army and navy had rushed every possible reinforcement to the Philippines immediately after Pearl Harbor before the Japanese could strengthen their defensive positions, conditions might have been changed. But understandably, after being crippled at Pearl Harbor, the navy was unwilling to risk its few remaining ships in another potential disaster. As local efforts to supply Bataan failed, MacArthur and his staff became bitterly convinced that they had been abandoned by Washington.

In the meantime, the Philippine-American forces on Bataan suffered badly from exhaustion, lack of supplies, disease and casualties. Unknown to them, the Japanese forces on Bataan were also nearing exhaustion after continuous assaults following the invasion, and by February illness and heavy casualties required them to demand more troops. Unfortunately, after the long and costly retreat the defending forces were too weak to counterattack and the battle bogged down. Soon MacArthur's Philippine campaign was criticized as having been "too optimistic and too grandiose," the destruction of his air force on the ground had been indefensible, his conduct of a ground campaign had almost become a disaster, and he had failed to fulfill his exaggerated promises for help for General Jonathan Wainwright's valiant, but hopeless, stand on Bataan. On the other hand, MacArthur's withdrawal tactics against the vastly superior Japanese forces have been characterized as "a brilliant delaying campaign of resistance."

Once having recognized that their forces in Southeast Asia were inadequate to contain Japanese aggressions, Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt agreed in January 1942 to make an Allied defensive stand from upper Burma through Malaysia and Indonesia to New Guinea. Meanwhile, British and Indian forces failed to hold up the Japanese drive down through Malaysia towards Singapore and had retreated with considerable losses. In one of the most monstrous blunders of the war, Singapore long considered by the British to be invulnerable, had all of its big guns pointed towards the sea which left the city defenseless against the landside attack of the Japanese. It was the most embarrassing defeat of British military arms in history, particularly since the British forces on hand actually

exceeded those of the Japanese. However, the decisive factor was that Japan's air power had proved to be greatly superior.

After Singapore surrendered on February 15, the entire Southeast Pacific remained practically undefended. Throughout the area the Allied situation had become disastrous, and on March 11 Washington ordered MacArthur to leave Corregidor for Australia from where the war against Japan would eventually be launched. Soon conditions became so bad for General Wainwright that by April 8 he was forced to evacuate Bataan for a final stand at Corregidor. But within thirty days the fierce and continuous assaults of the Japanese forced the surrender of the last "American bastion" in the Pacific. Although it had been apparent long before the war that the Philippines could not be defended, the brave and heroic resistance of the Philippine-American forces on Bataan and Corregidor provided a dramatic boost to American morale and made Douglas MacArthur the nation's first major hero of World War II.

The loss of the Philippines, however, would soon become one of the great controversies of the Pacific War. Roosevelt, Marshall and King were blamed for the unnecessary sacrifice of the American possession and Washington was generally held responsible for the lack of effective military measures to defend the Islands. MacArthur insisted that "a serious naval effort" would have prevented the catastrophe and stopped the spectacular success of the Japanese assaults across Southeast Asia. Others held that, considering other circumstances and the war with Germany, it had been completely impractical to utilize adequate shipping to force and maintain a lifeline to the Philippines. MacArthur was also blamed for the misapplication of resources, and the air force and the navy was criticized for their failure to effectively oppose the Japanese assaults. Also, the contention that MacArthur succeeded in holding up the Japanese advance and gained time in Australia, New Guinea and the Solomons for defense is disputed. It was true, however, that only in the Philippines had the Japanese advance been successfully held up, if only temporarily.

There was much for the Japanese to be pleased about and there was great joy and much pride in Tokyo. They had brazenly challenged the mighty powers of the United States and Great Britain and with "great cunning and limited resources," the small Asiatic island nation had aggressively invaded the Southeast Asian area with relatively easy success. Due to their aggressive surprise attacks

against almost totally defenseless people throughout the area, they were victorious everywhere. What was most surprising was that the presence of forces from the "great powers" had offered such ineffective resistance and the Japanese assaults had succeeded without a single defeat. In fact, such unexpected success enabled them to advance their plans for the conquest of Indonesia and even to increase their forces in Manchuria against the possibility of a Russian attack. Nonetheless, their assumption that America might accept their aggressions without a strong and effective retaliation was a colossal blunder. The reality was that after such a brutal and extensive violation of the freedom and independence of so many innocent countries, in spite of their struggle with Germany and Italy in Europe, it was only a question of time before the combined power of the United States and Britain would begin to mobilize their overwhelming forces against Japan. Author Ronald Spector declares that Japan's attack on the United States was the greatest blunder of the war.

At that time, however, with Allied forces "in defeat and disarray everywhere," Roosevelt and Churchill realized the gravity of the situation and resolved to do everything possible to defeat the Japanese aggressions in Asia consistent with the previously declared priority for the war against Hitler. They believed that the geography of the Pacific area, the nature of the conflict with Japan, and the resources available to the Allies would require two separate and distinct Allied campaigns in Asia. First, and most importantly, the vast Pacific area from Japan down to Australia and eastward to the Marshall Islands would be the responsibility of the United States, and Southeast Asia from Singapore across the Indian Ocean to India, as well as across the Middle East to the Mediterranean, would be the responsibility of Great Britain. A Pacific War Council was set-up at Washington with Britain, Canada, Australia, China, New Zealand and the Netherlands as a war consultative body, but the United States and Great Britain retained the sole right to decide operational authority within their respective areas.

During the first three weeks of 1942, 80,000 US troops (four times the troops sent to Europe in the same period), were scheduled for deployment to the Pacific. By the end of the year the number would be 200,000 in addition to planes and ships to defend the lifelines to Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands. In a much debated decision, MacArthur and the US Army were placed in command of the Southwest Pacific area, and Admiral Chester Nimitz and the US Navy

were given command of the remainder of the Pacific Ocean area. It was an unusual and peculiar command arrangement which, unfortunately, created great controversy and much dissension over leadership, strategy, and limited supplies, equipment, aircraft, and ships throughout the Pacific conflict. In effect, it meant that the navy would take control over the army and the army would take control over the navy in an arrangement which resulted, it was charged, in unnecessary and avoidable difficulties as well as ineffective operations. But, due to an exceptional situation under unique conditions and restrictions, it was considered to be the most effective operational plan that could be devised.

With Europe taking priority over Allied operations and following the debacle at Pearl Harbor, the United States had no choice but initially to take the defensive to protect Hawaii, Midway and the Johnson Islands to prevent the Japanese from blocking access to the South Pacific and to Australia. At the same time, planners for the war in Europe were concerned that men and resources would be shipped to the Pacific that were critically needed to defeat the greater and more threatening enemy of Nazism. They also believed that the navy wanted the army to occupy the Pacific islands mainly as "safe havens" for their ships. Thus it quickly became a struggle for priorities by the theaters of operations and between the army and the navy.

Fortunately and unexpectedly, the future strategy of the United States navy benefited greatly as a result of the tragedy at Pearl Harbor. Of necessity, the navy was forced to abandon its outdated battleship operations held over from World War I. The concept of the carrier task force became the new and effective tactic that would prove to revolutionize naval warfare. Furthermore, the Japanese were the first to employ the new tactic which resulted in naval ships being used in a secondary role for providing support for aircraft bombing as a major weapon of the Pacific War. Initially, Japan's training and experience with its carrier forces and its advanced *Zero* fighter aircraft gave them a substantial offensive superiority over the United States navy. American naval leadership had seriously blundered by failing to provide carriers and aircraft more numerous and more advanced than those of the Japanese. By their failure to understand and to prepare for the revolutionary importance of the role of aviation in modern warfare, the American navy committed a fatal blunder which had a disastrous effect upon the United States forces during the war with Japan.

In January 1942 the Japanese attack on the Netherlands East Indies had begun and the defense of the area was placed under British, American, Dutch and Australian forces under General Archibald Wavell. Limited Dutch forces had also been stationed throughout the island area with very little air support, and the defending naval vessels included no aircraft carriers. On February 28 an Allied fleet under command of Dutch Admiral Karel Doorman challenged a large Japanese invasion force in the Battle of the Java Sea. Two Dutch cruisers together with two British ships and one American vessel were sunk, and by the time the invaders completed their landings, Allied naval resistance in the East Indies had become practically non-existent.

Elated over such unexpected victories, the Japanese immediately pursued further conquests. First, they wanted to attack Australia to prevent its use as an American base for counterattack, then decided that their resupply lines would be too long and vulnerable. As a major base, Port Moresby in New Guinea was selected since its aircraft would be able to attack Allied offensives being launched from Australia. Other potential objectives were New Caledonia, Fiji and Samoa so as to isolate Australia and to move towards India and beyond to link-up with the Germans coming down from the Middle East. An attack on Midway was also proposed to draw the American fleet into battle where it could be destroyed, but while the plan was being discussed a totally unexpected and spectacular feat occurred. In mid-April 1942, General Jimmy Doolittle launched sixteen B-25 bombers from the carrier *USS Hornet* 650 miles at sea and successfully bombed Tokyo. It was a daring and dramatic initiative which greatly raised American morale. It had not only demonstrated America's potential power, but equally important, it revealed Japan's inability to defend herself against air attacks. While the Japanese were surprised and shocked, it also eliminated any Japanese opposition to their proposed attack on Midway, and advanced their timetable for operations against New Guinea and the Solomon Islands to protect the bases established at Rabaul and Truk.

When Nimitz learned from deciphered codes that Japan was ready to launch new landings in the Pacific area, he immediately chose the risk of rushing his carriers to join Admiral Frank Fletcher's Task Force in the Coral Sea. Then, as the Americans first struck the Japanese invasion fleet as it attempted a landing at Tulagi, the carrier *Shoko* was sunk, and the enemy was forced to withdraw back

to Rabaul. Then the US task force had headed northwest to cut off the Port Moresby invasion force when the aircraft of the *Lexington* and the *Yorktown* ran into enemy planes from the *Zuikaku* and *Shokaku* only to find that both the aircraft and the torpedoes of the Japanese were much superior to those of the United States. The *Lexington* was lost, the *Yorktown* was damaged and the American force withdrew. However, the Japanese were unable to pursue as the *Shokaku* had received heavy damage and, with insufficient planes left to cover a successful invasion, the assault on Port Moresby was called off. Both sides claimed victory in the Battle of the Coral Sea which was the first significant naval battle of the Pacific war. But the United States had been left with only two carriers in the entire Pacific area which gave a definite advantage to Japan's five carriers. Still the attempted invasion of Port Moresby had been defeated and, most fortunately, two Japanese carriers would not be available against the Americans in the forthcoming decisive battle at Midway.

For their attack on Midway, the Japanese included sixteen groups of ships which involved most of their available naval forces. Led by four of their largest carriers and three of their most powerful battleships, the assault would be deployed to best meet the expected counterattack by the Americans. Two light carriers would accompany a smaller force to occupy the Aleutian Islands to provide a diversion and to prevent reinforcements from North America while submarine pickets were set out to screen any approach of the enemy from Hawaii. Accordingly, it was expected that their surprise attack on Midway would be protected from almost any direction and would be completed before the Americans could intervene. Lastly, the battleships would move up after the carrier plane attacks to finish off enemy resistance to the troop landings. It was a good plan which they believed would be a certain success. But, unknown to them, their enemy had intercepted the transmission of their plans. Even so, most historians agree, the Japanese might still have succeeded had they not spread their carriers over too great an area instead of concentrating them against the expected American forces.

But fortunately for the American naval forces, five of their battleships were tied up to defend the West Coast so that, unlike the Japanese, they did not have to depend on "outdated battlewagon tactics" as a major part of their operations. With full knowledge of the enemy's operational plans, the United States navy was

prepared to destroy most of the enemy fleet as it unknowingly rushed into their trap at Midway. As the assault force approached Midway, the Japanese launched their first planes on June 4, and the Americans were waiting. The attacking force was quickly struck by planes from three American carriers plus the land-based planes from Midway. Fortunately, just as the American naval forces converged on the attackers, the Japanese made their most damaging mistake. Their carriers had elected to rearm their bombers and were waiting for their returning fighters when the attacking Americans caught them on deck in their most vulnerable condition. It would become the most fateful day of the war for Japan.

The Battle of Midway ended as a glorious victory for the United States and a shattering defeat for Japan. The Japanese lost four carriers and a heavy cruiser, another cruiser was damaged, and many of their most experienced pilots were shot down. They had badly blundered by bringing disaster upon themselves by poor planning and execution, as well as by carelessness and over-confidence. While their only realistic chance from the beginning had been to delay the eventual effect of America's overwhelming advantage of resources, the unexpected losses at Midway only hastened the inevitable defeat of their limited military potential. Consequently, the Japanese navy had received a mortal wound from which it would never recover.

With the United States losing only one carrier and one destroyer, even greater damage should have been inflicted on the enemy. Due to its inferior planes and largely ineffective bombing tactics, as well as the inexperience of both admirals and pilots, there were excessive American losses of both men and planes. In fact, their land-based planes had failed to inflict any damage upon the enemy. Luckily for the Yanks, their victory was due more to poor command by the Japanese than to intercepted transmissions. But it proved to be the turning point of the war for Japan, for after Midway they made the critical error of using largely defensive tactics which resulted in the destruction of most of their limited naval defense through attrition. Generally, wars cannot be won without effective offensive operations, and obviously, it is much easier to start a war than to finish it. Usually the sacrifices and losses of the adversaries has been so great that they are unwilling to accept the consequences of defeat and to admit that all was in vain. So the hopeless struggle continues and the war is not "won" until one adversary finally destroys the other. In this case, the only hope for the Japanese was that the

Americans and British might eventually negotiate an armistice because of attrition which could, at least, provide them with some of the benefits for which they had fought. Lastly, they were determined to fight to the bitter end since they considered an honorable defeat to be preferable to a dishonorable surrender.

Meanwhile, on July 21 the Japanese had landed 16,000 men at Buna, New Guinea and began to push towards Port Moresby. By September they had reached the last defensive barriers before their objective when the brave and relentless Aussies drove them back at Milne Bay in what was hailed as one of the first Allied victories of the Pacific War. It had appeared that once the Japanese had decided on an objective, they had difficulty adjusting to changing circumstances. In spite of their losses at Midway, which limited the future use of their fleet, they continued to press two advances into New Guinea across the Papua Peninsula towards Buna and into the Solomon Islands to establish airbases. But by then, Australia had become more secure with the return of many of its troops and with the reinforcement of substantial forces from the United States. Consequently, additional Aussie units were sent to Port Moresby and by January 21, 1943 MacArthur's Australian-American forces had managed to eliminate the Japanese at Buna. The cost, however, involved 8,500 battle casualties and three times that number were stricken with malaria and other tropic illnesses.

Japan's continuing offensives did succeed in capturing undefended Kiska and Attu in the Aleutian Islands which created a great outcry in the United States over the enemy occupation of part of North America. By mid-1943 a substantial American expedition was sent to overcome the occupation of the Alaskan islands and 2,500 Japanese were finally wiped out at Attu after strong resistance. However, when the American troops finally managed to go ashore at Kiska, after no less than six weeks of heavy bombing, they found that the Japanese had been evacuated weeks earlier. More than 100 ships and 100,000 men of the army, navy and air force had been employed in one of the most bungled operations of World War II. "The Battle of the Aleutians" was called one of the costliest "goofs" of the war! It was also a very bungled waste of troops and resources by Japan since it provided them no military benefit whatsoever.

The initial offensive operations of the Allies on land in the Southwest Pacific were directed at Guadalcanal and the Solomons to prevent the Japanese from cutting off Allied access to Australia. But MacArthur's desire to advance against

the major Japanese base at Rabaul resulted in one of the most controversial questions of the Pacific War. Should there be just one overall Allied command establishing strategy and controlling operations and resources over land, sea and air forces as under Eisenhower in Europe? Or, in consideration of the widely diverse geographic nature of the Pacific conflict, should the status of forces and Allied interests and objectives divide the command and operations into independent areas with the India-China-Burma area under the British and the Southwest Pacific area under the United States? And in the American area, should the North Pacific including the Solomons go to the navy under the command of Admiral Chester Nimitz, and the Southeast Pacific area including Australia, East Indies and the Philippines go to the army under General Douglas MacArthur? In any case, that was the Allied plan that was adopted. Critics have argued that one over-all Supreme Commander would have eliminated inter-Allied and inter-service controversies, would have provided better directed and coordinated operations and use of resources, and would have saved many lives and brought an earlier end to the war in the Pacific. Others hold the view that the chosen arrangement worked as well as could be expected under the prevailing circumstances of a very complex and difficult situation.

After the decisive battle at Midway, both MacArthur and Nimitz were anxious to follow-up the victory with counteroffensives to maintain the newly gained momentum of the American forces. But the decision by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to divide operational responsibility between the Army (MacArthur) and the Navy (Nimitz) met immediate controversy. The compromise, it was argued, was unnecessarily complicated with difficult command arrangements and became the basis for the bickering and dissension which lasted throughout the war. Army historian Louis Morton commented that it "led to duplication of effort and keen competition" for limited supplies of ships, landing craft, and airplanes. Also, interservice rivalry disrupted and stymied much of the Pacific operations which obviously affected the efficiency of command and the deployment of men and resources. Despite the dispute, it was decided that the new American offensive would take three stages: the first, under Nimitz, to occupy Tulagi and Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands to begin the drive to cut off the Japanese movement across the Southwest Pacific; the second, an advance by MacArthur across the northeast of New Guinea to begin the attack on the major Japanese

base at Rabaul; and thirdly, for Nimitz to continue his attacks up through the Solomons. It was a compromise between the two services which "hardly satisfied anyone," and it was considered to have consumed more lives and time than expected nor could be justified.

The controversy over the questionably complicated command structure in the Pacific has never ended. The chain-of-command for MacArthur and Nimitz required instructions to pass down from the Joint Chiefs of Staff through the top commander of the respective services at Washington. It was a cumbersome arrangement which was considered to be an "abomination" by both services. The US Army official history says that it caused "duplication, competition and bureaucracy." Other claims contended that it was a disastrous arrangement which allowed the traditional Army-Navy way of doing things of the past "to obstruct the innovations and technology necessary for rapidly developing new methods of warfare strategy and operations." Moreover, Nimitz and MacArthur each would have command over combined land, sea and air operations with which neither had much knowledge or experience, and it would result in accusations of one service misusing the resources of the other. Finally, it resulted in little personal contact between either commander and their service chiefs.

The other great controversy involved the island-hopping strategy about which many important questions have been raised. Was it unnecessarily wasteful of both men and resources? Did the US naval and air forces have the capability to prevent the enemy's island-based tactics from interfering with American operations directed at Japan itself? Had not Japan's defensive forces already been reduced so that it was incapable of effective offensive operations? Would it not have been more efficient, and much less costly in men and materiel, to have conducted US offensive operations directly against the Japanese homeland without subjecting US forces to the terrible and bloody carnage involved in liberating the Japanese-held islands? Why couldn't such islands be simply cut off and left to die? In fact, it was suggested that since the effectiveness of the Japanese naval forces had been critically reduced at Midway, the enemy occupied islands were incapable of effective interference, and American forces should have attacked Japan directly with massive air and naval bombardments, blockade and lastly, if needed, amphibious landings? Instead it is claimed, island-hopping over a period of 18 months required the assembly and execution of a highly complicated

amphibious invasion about every thirty-five days which exacted a tremendous toll of men and materiel. For instance, after the US landing on Mindanao and Leyte in the Philippines in October 1944, over 135,000 Japanese troops had been bypassed without any chance of rescue. Instead, another year of vicious struggle consumed masses of humanity and resources as the largely American forces were required to brutally force their way some 1,300 miles closer to Japan.

Meanwhile, the Japanese had driven from Malaysia across Thailand without resistance and the British had been driven out of Burma into India. Japan had not only gained new rubber and oil resources but they also had cut off Allied supply routes for aid to China. By December 1942 the British, Indian and Chinese forces, with American air support, had been built-up in India and a Burmese offensive was launched. But the Allied forces under General Wavell proved to be too weak and too slow and were pushed back into India. By February 1943, after fifty-two squadrons of aircraft were on hand, General W.J. Slim's Indian troops attempted to block the Japanese from advancing into India by capturing the airfields at Akyab, but their effort to hold a line from Maungdaw to Buthidaung ended in "a complete and dismal failure." According to B.H. Liddell-Hart, British tactics against the enemy had engaged in a "blundering disregard for the indirect approach," and Burma remained under Japan's control until near the end of the war.

Later Allied offensive operations in Burma were resumed when the 77th Indian Brigade was reorganized to be used as "jungle fighters," and the guerrilla operation of Orde Wingate's roving "Chindits" became well-known. With 3,200 men Wingate penetrated a hundred miles into Burma across the Irawaddy River before being driven back into India after losing a third of his men to a Japanese counterattack. The operation accomplished little for the British other than the psychological effect of having attempted to resume the offensive. Subsequent British attempts to mount offensive operations included plans for a seaborne attack on Rangoon and an assault against Sumatra. However, both were abandoned when the Americans insisted on the necessity for reestablishing a land route of supply to help Chiang Kai-shek's forces in China. But in early 1944 the British successfully turned back the Japanese at Arakan and a major offensive into India by Japan was defeated in the battles of Imphal and Kohima. Generally, the operations of the British army in the Burma campaign were plagued with

difficulties and made little progress. The United States, while preferring not to be drawn into what it considered to be Britain's struggle to regain her lost colonies, recognized aid was needed to keep Chinese forces in the war as well as to establish bases in China from which the new B-29 long-range bombers could attack Japan. Thus all future theater operations in northern Burma were to be concentrated to maintain the Allied flow of supplies from India to China.

The major American offensive operations in the Southwest Pacific got underway in June 1942 as Admiral William Halsey's forces invaded New Britain and MacArthur's American and Australian troops began their operations directed towards the capture of Salamaua and Lae in New Guinea. By August 5 Halsey had captured Munda and by nightfall two days later, after heavy naval and aerial bombardments, 11,000 Marines would go ashore at Guadalcanal having found that 2,200 Japanese constructing the airfield had fled into the jungle. At Tulagi, however, 6,000 Marines required two days to overcome a strong defense by 1,500 Japanese troops. But Japan had erred by attempting to counter the American assaults with numerous and inadequate reinforcements which resulted in several naval engagements and a lengthy and bloody battle at Guadalcanal.

As a prelude to the attack on Guadalcanal, Nimitz's invasion force of eighty-two ships had taken three of the minor islands of the Solomons against little resistance. But Admiral Frank Fletcher, worried about the whereabouts of four Japanese carriers known to be in the area, arbitrarily withdrew his carriers which left Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner's invasion fleet uncovered. Suddenly, a Japanese squadron which had passed undetected through the "Slot"(a narrow passage between the Solomon Islands), struck Turner and four Allied cruisers were sunk and two destroyers and a cruiser were damaged in the sound south of Savo. Turner claimed he had been left unprotected and naval historians have criticized Fletcher. In the Battle of Savo Island the Japanese had not lost a single ship while the United States lost four out of five heavy cruisers and 1,023 seamen. It was one of the worst defeats for the United States navy in the entire war. But at nearby Guadalcanal by the end of D-Day, 11,000 Marines had gotten ashore without a single casualty and mountains of supplies had moved safely across the beaches. In Japan, however, the "Victory at Savo" was considered to have been more important than the loss of Guadalcanal. However, the American navy's poor

performance at Guadalcanal made its future relations with the army even more difficult and John Toland called it the US Navy's "most humiliating defeat."

Another Japanese attempt to relieve Guadalcanal was led by the carrier *Ryujo* with two battleships and three cruisers accompanied by the carriers *Zuikaku* and *Shokaku* which intended to trap the American fleet. Fortunately, the Americans had been warned by Australian "Coastwatchers" and three US task forces were situated around the carriers *Enterprise*, *Wasp* and *Saratoga*. In what turned out to be the indecisive Battle of the Eastern Solomons, American aircraft destroyed seventy of the enemy's eighty planes and sank the carrier *Ryujo*. However, the *USS Enterprise* was seriously damaged and the American fleet was subsequently crippled when submarines sank the *Wasp* and badly damaged the *Saratoga*.

Meanwhile, the fierce battle of Guadalcanal raged on and the Japanese continued to shuttle reinforcements while the Battle of Cape Esperance took place. Although the losses were not high for either side, 22,000 Japanese troops were placed on land compared to 23,000 for the attacking Americans. By late October, anticipating a victory at Guadalcanal, Admiral Yamamoto brought his Combined Fleet forward consisting of two fleet carriers, two light carriers, four battleships, fourteen cruisers and forty-four destroyers. The Americans had only half as many ships to oppose him including the new battleship *South Dakota*, several cruisers and the carriers *Hornet* and the repaired *Enterprise*. On October 26 the two fleets met in the Battle of the Santa Cruz Island and, in spite of Japan's superior force, the battle was a draw. While the *Hornet* was sunk and the *Enterprise* was damaged, both the *Shokaku* and the light carrier *Zuiho* were crippled. In the air war the American victory had been decisive with seventy enemy planes shot down for a ten-day total of 200 plus an additional 300 since August.

Finally, there were two more naval clashes known as the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal on November 13-15 in which the Japanese tried to convoy another 11,000 troops to the battlefield, but managed to get only 4,000 ashore. Two Japanese battleships, the *Hiei* and the *Kirishima*, were so badly damaged they were both scuttled, and even though seven Japanese troop transports were destroyed, numerous American destroyers were badly damaged. Most importantly, though, attempts to relieve the island were abandoned due to heavy losses and all remaining Japanese troops were evacuated. The awesome battle of Guadalcanal was won at last.

Although the success of Japan's initial campaign throughout the entire western and southwestern area of the Pacific had greatly exceeded all expectations, their efforts to defeat the threat of American and British countermeasures from Australia and Hawaii had failed. It had become apparent that the struggle for the control of the area had been lost by Japan's decisive defeats at Midway and Guadalcanal. In a little more than a year, the Allies had reversed any hope the Japanese might have had for a stalemate, let alone a victory. Now it had become merely a question of how long Japan could hold out against its powerful enemies? Yet their leaders continued to believe their defense of the homeland would be so costly that an acceptable compromise for peace would be sought by their enemies. They also believed their destiny required all citizens to sacrifice themselves to preserve their Emperor and their country.

As soon as the Guadalcanal campaign had ended future strategy had to be determined. General MacArthur wanted a strong push from New Guinea and the Solomons up to the Philippines and the navy proposed an advance across the Central Pacific from the Marshalls to Formosa. Again it was a classic army-navy squabble. MacArthur argued that his route would deprive Japan of her new conquests in Southeast Asia and cut-off the supply of oil and other much-needed resources. The navy claimed their route would allow their new carrier forces to avoid flank attacks from the Japanese occupied islands. Of course, the navy also wanted to keep their carriers away from MacArthur's control. But the real issue related to the determination of the most efficient way to strike the enemy where he was most vulnerable so as to end the war as soon as possible with the least loss of life? It was described as a controversy over which "tentacles of the octopus should be cut to best get at the heart?"

In a greatly disputed decision at the Trident Conference at Washington in May 1943, Roosevelt and Churchill compromised by directing that both proposals be pursued with a "double-thrust" against the enemy. The view was accepted that by using both routes the Japanese would be kept guessing. However, it was criticized as a costly and disastrous mistake. As regarded General Eisenhower's "broad-front" strategy in Europe which was constantly attacked by the British, charges were made that there should have been just one powerful and overwhelming offense to end the war at the earliest possible date at the smallest possible cost. Without question, the war in the Pacific was delayed by divided

preparations involving the supply and concentration of troops, ships, landing craft, and aircraft, as well as for the development of airfields and naval bases. Equally true, Japan was given greater time to build and expand her defenses which held up Allied advances and inflicted greater losses of Allied lives. But the question remains unresolved. What would have been the time required and the losses incurred resulting from a single strong strike at the heart of Japan? So the question of the broad front versus the single-thrust, in the Pacific as well as in Europe, remains unresolved. But one thing is known, in both Asia and in Europe, the broad-front strategy was successful, and the single-thrust might not have been!

By mid-1943 the Allies had succeeded in building up their forces in the Pacific area substantially while Japan's army and navy were fighting over how best to proceed with the war. A final compromise resulted in the decision to maintain a defensive line from Santa Isabel and New Georgia in the Solomons, where their 17th Army and 7th Air Division were stationed, to Lae in New Guinea which was covered by the 18th Army and the 6th Air Division. The 8th Fleet and the 11th Air Fleet were based at Rabaul which served as the Japanese headquarters for the entire area. Substantial reinforcements expected within a six-month period would add from ten to fifteen divisions and as many as 850 aircraft. Confidently, the Japanese believed that they still possessed adequate resources to maintain a strong defense against the Allied determination to destroy Japan by their demand for "unconditional surrender."

Meanwhile, Douglas MacArthur was given strategic command of the New Guinea-Solomons sector of operations. Admiral "Bull" Halsey would serve as tactical commander of the South Pacific, and naval units from Hawaii would remain under Admiral Chester Nimitz's Pacific Ocean command. The strategy called for Halsey to establish a base in the Russell Islands near Guadalcanal and to take two islands just east of New Guinea to be used as air bases against Rabaul. Next, Halsey would occupy Munda at New Georgia followed, hopefully, by the capture of Bougainville while MacArthur would seize the approaches to Lae in New Guinea. Finally, MacArthur would invade the Bismarck Archpelago for the attack on Rabaul with seven Australian and American divisions and 1,000 aircraft backed up by two American and eight Australian divisions in transit or training. Halsey was assigned seven divisions and 1,800 aircraft in addition to six

battleships and two carriers. These available forces were considered to be more than adequate for their tasks and it was expected that the operations would be completed within eight months.

On February 21 Halsey found the Russell Islands to be unoccupied and his naval forces closed the infamous "Slot" through which the Japanese had launched their successful raids. Then, as the Japanese sent a convoy to reinforce their efforts to capture an airfield at Wau in New Guinea, the ships were caught by the Allied air forces in the Battle of the Bismarck Sea. Half the destroyers and all of the transports were sunk with the loss of 3,600 soldiers. It was a disastrous loss for Japan since all the support for its troops in New Guinea had been cut off except by barge and submarine.

The major US offensives got underway on June 30 as the 6th Army troops landed in the Trobriand Islands and found no enemy while US ground forces supported the Australians in New Guinea without serious enemy opposition. Admiral Halsey, however, found strong opposition from 10,000 Japanese in New Georgia, but the enemy eventually evacuated its troops to Bougainville. While the Japanese had lost about 2,500 men and seventeen ships in the operation, the American command finally realized that "island-hopping" was too costly, especially regarding the time and losses involved. Thus the decision was made to bypass strong hold-outs such as Kolombangara manned by 10,000 Japanese which would greatly advance Allied progress northwards. Furthermore, MacArthur's attack on the Huron Peninsula involving amphibious, airborne and ground operations proved to be slow, and Salamana and Lae were found to have been vacated. Actually, the US Joint Chiefs had suggested that the heavy enemy concentration at Rabaul be by-passed also, and both MacArthur and Halsey were anxious to press on. So, by the end of the year, the Allied forces were ready to drive on to Madang both from the coast and from the interior.

By that time, America's increased production of planes and ships was well underway and Japan's Imperial command was forced to recognize that the rapidly growing armed might of the United States, now beginning to be so evident in land, sea and air operations, could no longer be contained. The Japanese had been forced to acknowledge that their ability to replace lost men, aircraft and ships was greatly deficient compared to that of their enemy and they were particularly concerned about the American fleet at Hawaii which had become "the

largest battle assembly of ships since World War I." Obviously, their only choice was to shorten their lines of defense. Therefore, a "minimum defensive line" was set running from Burma along the coast of Malaysia to western New Guinea, then to the Carolines, the Marianas and up to the Kuriles. That meant, in effect, that New Guinea, the Bismarcks, Gilberts and Marshall Islands were no longer considered essential and that their loss would be off-set by an increase in the availability of more ships and aircraft. On the other hand, Japan's greatly reduced defensive capabilities would have to resist twenty Allied divisions and 3,000 aircraft with only three divisions in eastern New Guinea, one in New Britain, one at Bougainville, and another in transit. In other areas, they had to hold twenty-six divisions in China and fifteen in Manchuria against any potential attack from the Soviet Union. It had clearly become a desperate and hopeless situation.

Due to a shortage of shipping, Halsey found that he could only land one division at a time at Bougainville which, defended by 40,000 soldiers and 20,000 sailors, was one of the strongest enemy bases in the Pacific area. But by using his carrier-based aircraft effectively, the unexpected Americans got ashore at Empress Augusta Bay on November 1, 1943. By mid-December 40,000 men were landed but a furious Japanese defense resulted in a lengthy stalemate. Meantime, on New Guinea MacArthur landed his forces between Madang and the Huron Peninsula and by April 24, 1943 he had occupied Madang. While Rabaul would be by-passed, the American forces continued their western drive in New Guinea and the western end of New Britain was successfully invaded which forced the Japanese into a long withdrawal back to Rabaul. Earlier in March a 4,000 man garrison had been overcome and the Admiralty Islands were converted into a major United States base of operations. Having successfully breeched the barrier of the Bismarcks, and with Rabaul neutralized, substantial progress was being gained at less cost than expected. For instance, at Bougainville the Japanese lost 8,000 men while 300 were lost by the United States.

MacArthur and Halsey next directed the thrust of their successful campaign towards the Philippines from which the Americans could move onto the Chinese mainland to establish airfields for the bombing of the Japanese homeland. Their progress had been much greater than expected so that the naval operations of Nimitz were directed northwards toward the capture of the Marianas Islands to place Tokyo within range of the new B-29 long-range aircraft. The initial major

targets included Makin and Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands from which the attack on the Marshall Islands would be based. The 2nd Marine Division assaulted the beaches of Tarawa in November 1943 from an invasion fleet that included six carriers, five cruisers and six new battleships with 1,000 aircraft. The assault progressed slowly on Makin although it was lightly defended by only 800 Japanese, but on Tarawa the marines were opposed by 5,000 heavily fortified enemies. After stiff resistance inflicted heavy casualties on the attackers, the Japanese literally destroyed themselves in fanatic suicide attacks. While one escort carrier was lost, the US navy had confirmed that it's carrier task forces were more than a match for Japanese attacks from the air. However, in the battle that followed there was much public criticism over American losses and costly mistakes during the amphibious landings at Tarawa.

Fortunately, it was decided to by-pass the more easterly islands in the Marshalls and to make the initial assault landing at Kwajalein atoll in January 1944. A formidable force was assembled composed of 85,000 troops with twelve carriers and eight battleships. Most advantageously, substantial numbers of new amphibious vehicles and rocket batteries were employed so that after four days of fierce fighting the main base of the Japanese in the Marshalls was seized. The quick success resulted in another fast strike at the Eniwetok atoll by the marines and the infantry, and in two and a half days all resistance was eliminated. Thus the outer perimeter of Japan's defense had been broken and, most importantly, the Marianas lay just 1,000 miles ahead which would enable the B-29 superfortresses to operate against Japan itself. Also, the American fleet had been rapidly expanded and it had quickly destroyed much of the enemy's naval capability to defend itself. However, the Japanese military refused to face reality by continuing to believe their island bases would draw the American fleet forward where it could be attacked and destroyed.

On June 30, 1943 Halsey had invaded New Britain and MacArthur struck Nassau Bay in New Guinea in a drive for Salamaua and Lae. The Australians took Lae on September 4 and ten days later Salamaua and Lae were in Allied hands and the Japanese were driven out of Papua. By August 5 Halsey had captured Munda and Bougainville had been invaded on November 1 to capture its six airfields. Although 60,000 Japanese personnel continued to defend the area until it was finally overcome in April 1944, three of the airfields were captured

and used to attack the huge Japanese base at Rabaul. Then, for the first time since Pearl Harbor, powerful Allied forces of men, ships and planes were available for new offensive actions against the enemy. Then the much disputed decision was made to advance from island to island to reduce the area controlled by the enemy prior to the eventual assault upon the Japanese homeland. Many believed that was a stupendous blunder. They contend that since the power of the Japanese in both the air and on the sea had been crippled, and that the American forces had become so dominant that the enemy-held islands should have been by-passed. Then there would be no necessity for a highly costly invasion since Japan could have been forced to surrender by bombing and blockade alone.

The last island strongholds nearest Japan were heavily fortified and the Japanese had been trained to fight "desperately and skillfully" to fanatically resist the hated invaders. Largely, hand-to-hand fighting with disastrous casualties on both sides would be necessary to penetrate Japan's final offshore defenses. The Americans, however, insisted that the build-up for massive raids by the large new B-29 bombers required sites for airfields within range of Japan justified more island-hopping strategy. Accordingly, new offensives had been directed at the Gilbert Islands southwest of the Marshalls which led to the use of Tarawa as an airbase. And Kwajalein and Eniwetok in the Marshalls had been taken in February 1944. Still, the navy offensive pressed on past the Marshalls to the west some 1,200 miles against the enemy naval base at the Carolines where Truk was literally destroyed by US carrier planes. In order to help MacArthur's advance on Hollandia, Allied airstrikes had greatly reduced Rabaul's effectiveness as an enemy base as Halsey's forces headed for Saipan in the Marianas. And by July 1944, American forces had captured Guam and Tinian.

Following the success of the island campaigns, instead of advancing to Formosa as the air force wished, and in a political instead of a military decision, the liberation of the Philippines was chosen as the next objective for the forces of MacArthur and Halsey. Mindanao and Leyte were chosen as their first objectives while bypassing enemy forces in the East Indies, Celebes and Borneo. In the meantime, Peleliu, Morotai, and Ulithi were taken as bases for the assault on the Philippines. The Japanese expected the attack and divided their fleet into three groups to enable one to draw US naval forces away from protecting their assaulting force which would be attacked by the remaining two Japanese naval groups.

The Battle of the Philippine Sea followed on June 19, 1944 which practically finished Japan's offensive naval capability despite desperate fanatic suicidal attacks by "kamikase pilots" to destroy the American fleet. Once ashore, MacArthur's ground forces on Leyte were "furiously opposed" by the enemy and it was early 1945 before Leyte and Luzon were liberated. After the war, to justify the attack it was claimed that the Philippines would have been used as the base for the five million men required for the invasion of the Japanese mainland set for November 1945.

It is also difficult to understand that in spite of their access to the Japanese naval codes, let alone their normal responsibility for intelligence functions, the American navy committed a tremendous blunder by failing to determine that Japan's navy had become almost totally defenseless. Without effective naval forces, Japan's by-passed island and Philippine forces were already isolated and useless. There was no need nor justification for island-hopping. Particularly, the monstrous and deadly assaults on Iwo Jima and Okinawa should not have occurred. And finally, the war with Japan would have ended much more quickly had US resources been concentrated directly against the defenses of Japan itself. But unfortunately, by early 1945 B-29 attacks on Japan from Saipan and Guam were rapidly increasing and the air force had insisted that such long flights to and from Japan were causing as many losses as by enemy action. It was also alleged that bases closer to Japan were needed for fighter escorts and that Iwo Jima would provide both landing beaches and favorable sites for aircraft. Furthermore, a direct attack on the mainland by the Americans could have occurred only after extensive advanced aerial and naval bombing, in addition to a blockade, which would have destroyed most of Japan's defensive resources. However, such assaults should not have been required since it was known by then that the use of the atom bomb was available which, as was the case, would have brought about a surrender without an invasion. In any case, the navy and the air force were responsible for much of the unwarranted and horrendous casualties at Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

Nonetheless, the American amphibious forces assembled for what would be the next to the last assault on Japan were the largest ever put together under one command. Japanese resistance could be expected to be formidable. In fact, 21,000 men were strongly entrenched on Iwo Jima in extensive defensive works

supported by heavy armaments and the Japanese High Command was determined to make their final line of outer defense as costly as possible to the enemy. For the US, heavy marine operations were already committed to MacArthur in the Philippines, advance preparations for an assault on Okinawa were underway, and air operations against Japan had substantially restricted the logistical support available for Iwo Jima. Consequently, the navy was forced to limit its pre-landing bombardment to three days that left many defensive installations intact, and while the landings were lightly opposed and 30,000 marines were ashore by nightfall, the entire landing force was soon struck by Japanese counterfire which inflicted heavy casualties. Immediately the conquest of Iwo Jima became a desperate struggle against a fanatic enemy who had to be literally driven out of caves and killed almost to a man. In what is described as some of the toughest fighting in World War II, at Iwo Jima 6,821 marines were killed and nearly 20,000 were wounded. Afterwards, Admiral Chester Nimitz said, "Iwo Jima was a place where uncommon valor became a common virtue."

But was the capture of Iwo Jima worth the terrible cost of American lives? The original intention for the use of the island as "a major offensive-base" against Japan never materialized. Ironically, little use was actually made of it as a base for fighter escorts in that the B-29's soon abandoned daylight raids on Japan . Then, in another huge intelligence deficiency, the air force discovered there was no danger from enemy night fighters since Japan had none. However, later the air force attempted to justify its demands by issuing a report that Iwo Jima had served as an emergency airfield for 2,400 landings by crippled or fuel-short B-29's and that many airman were saved. But it is still argued that the slaughter of the 3rd, 4th and 5th Marine Divisions for an emergency airfield which was lightly used was a blunder of the highest order. Moreover, as historians point out, had the invasion of the Japanese mainland been necessary, the loss of three experienced marine divisions could have been "a gross strategic error." Indeed, when all factors are considered, Iwo Jima was a gross blunder which cannot be justified.

By early 1945, after more than four years of ferocious struggle and at a terrible cost of human life, the Allies had successfully fought their way into the final approaches to their last objective. The sole remaining offshore base at Okinawa was only 350 miles from Japan and could be used as the major staging area for the final conquest of the enemy. The Japanese, of course, were very much aware

of the importance of Okinawa as the final opportunity to hold off the invasion of their country and the sixty mile long island had been turned into a massive fortress. Their best troops, however, had been sent earlier to defend the Philippines and only hastily organized troops with little experience were available to contest the powerful and overwhelming enemy assaults. In a desperate last resort, the defenders hoped their kamikase planes could neutralize the attacking fleet so that the enemy could be destroyed on the beaches. As at Iwo Jima, the major defense would be made from extensive underground caves and installations supported by substantial supplies and a large variety of heavy weapons.

Backed up by 1200 ships, 180,000 Marines arrived at Okinawa on April 1, 1945 and 50,000 had crossed the beaches by nightfall against light resistance. Also like Iwo Jima, when the troops began to move inland they were subjected to a deadly counterfire while the fleet underwent a desperate struggle against massive air attacks. With the enemy now within range of their bases in Japan, over 700 aircraft including 300 kamikase planes, attacked the invasion fleet. For weeks while the furious battle raged ashore, kamikaze planes attempted to crash and destroy the American ships in their suicidal attempts to save their country from invasion. While most of them were destroyed or crashed harmlessly in the sea, many got through and inflicted serious damage to the American navy especially against the destroyers and other smaller craft. Only heroic and superhuman efforts of the fire and damage control crews saved many of the larger ships along with many lives. But as the young Japanese pilots recklessly gave up their lives to what they believed to be their last effective weapon against the hated enemy, they succeeded in inflicting a huge loss of American lives and ships, but failed to be of much influence against an expected invasion of Japan.

The US Army's refusal to use B-29's to strike the kamikaze bases on Kyushu was criticized by Admiral Nimitz and Admiral Raymond Spruance complained that the army had not shown adequate aggressive initiative on Okinawa. The army, however, argued that the criticism was not justified since only hand-to-hand combat had enabled them to force the enemy out of their caves and deeply dug installations. The deadly and furious conflict raged on for nearly three months before the final suicidal resistance was overcome. 7,000 marine and army lives were lost and almost 5,000 navy men had died on the ships which surpassed any previous battle loss in US naval history. As for the enemy, more than

150,000 Japanese and Okinawan civilians futilely sacrificed their lives in vain for their country.

But it was yet another important victory for the United States which destroyed an entire Japanese army, hundreds of planes, and numerous ships including Japan's greatest battleship the *Yamato* and its newest light cruiser the *Yahagi*. Japan was now left with few resources with which to protect the homeland and the base had been captured on which the Allies planned to mobilize their vast resources for the final assault upon Japan. MacArthur and Nimitz began immediately to formulate their respective plans for the final conquest. The Navy preferred to use the South China coast as a base from which it could blockade and bombard Japan into submission. But the Army, noting that strategic bombing in Europe had failed to bring about an unconditional surrender, rightly argued that resorting to bombing and blockades would take years to end the war. MacArthur, calling for a double assault on Kyushu Island in the south and on the main island of Honshu, eventually convinced King and Nimitz to support his proposal. Because of the expected fanatic resistance of the Japanese, the Joints Chiefs at Washington believed the amphibious attacks on the Japanese mainland would even surpass the scale of the Normandy invasion and would involve the heaviest Allied fighting of World War II.

Under normal military precedents the Japanese might have been expected to surrender since the final assault would assure the almost total destruction of the nation and its people. But the military dictatorship had convinced the people of Japan that the Allied demand for unconditional surrender would mean the end of their country and the death and slavery of the Japanese people. It was also believed that the Americans would eliminate the rule of the Emperor who would be tried as a war criminal. But while General Marshall, Admiral Leahy, Secretary Stimson, Ambassador Grew and James Forrestal, as well as Winston Churchill, had urged Franklin Roosevelt to modify his "unconditional surrender" policy, especially regarding the Emperor's future role, Harry Hopkins, Dean Acheson and other FDR advisors firmly opposed any suggestion of compromise. Even a committee appointed by President Truman had recommended that the dynasty be retained. But the new Secretary of State James Byrnes claimed that any change in the unconditional surrender policy of FDR would have "unfavorable consequences" for the United States and that the American people were opposed to the

retention of the Emperor. Thus the United States advocated the adoption of the ambiguous Potsdam Declaration which resulted in disastrous consequences before the war with Japan could be ended.

Throughout the war with Japan, as in the war with Germany, one of the most unfortunate blunders involved the continual refusal of Presidents Roosevelt and Truman to modify the unconditional surrender policy which would have brought about an earlier surrender. It would also have made it unnecessary for the United States to drop atomic bombs on Japan and would not have granted Soviet Communism its aggressive annexation of much of Asia which brought such disastrous consequences to the status of democratic freedom in the postwar world. The main problem was that both George Marshall and Douglas MacArthur feared there would be horrible casualties from an invasion of Japan and they urged President Harry Truman to get the Soviet Union into the war as soon as possible in the hope that would cause Japan to end the war before a largely American invasion would be necessary. Unfortunately, the power and the effect of the A-bomb on the early ending of the war does not appear to have been adequately considered either by the military or by the President and his advisors. Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew attempted, unsuccessfully, to get Truman to notify the Japanese that unconditional surrender would not remove the Emperor, and Grew and Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy tried to convince Truman to offer Japan an "honorable surrender" in lieu of unconditional surrender. But Marshall and King persisted in the belief that otherwise the war against the fanatic Japanese could only be ended by an assault upon Japan itself resulting in the heaviest casualties of the war.

The record regarding the decision to use the atomic bomb remains unclear. John Costello reports that Churchill and Roosevelt had agreed a year before the end of the war to use the bomb if Japan refused to surrender. Some historians claim that Harry Truman believed it was necessary as a deterrent to the violent march of international Communism for world domination. As we now know, British and American Communist agents had already passed on the secrets of the bomb to the Soviets. But the record does clearly show that the Japanese were not only ready to surrender, they were trying to do so when the bombs were dropped. Also, many American military leaders held the view that it was unnecessary to use the bomb since Japan had been totally defeated, no longer possessed any effective

offensive power, and that aerial bombing and naval blockade would have quickly forced a surrender. Other military and civilian leaders contended there was no justification whatsoever for the use of the first atomic bombs which were released upon Japanese civilians in the most controversial action of World War II.

So the final, most desperate and horrible act of war involving the first and only use of the bomb of mass destruction against innocent civilians was intended to prevent a horrendous massacre of perhaps many hundreds of thousands of human beings as the Japanese prepared to commit national suicide rather than yield to the demand of their enemy for unconditional surrender. Perhaps because Franklin Roosevelt's delay of major political decisions until after the war had revealed such disastrous consequences, Harry Truman's decision to use the bomb was made on political, as well as military grounds, in spite of the fact that the Japanese were largely without effective means of defense, that their nation had already been almost completely destroyed by American bombing attacks, and that earnest efforts were being made to surrender with the so-called aid of the Soviets. But, instead of advancing Japan's surrender, it was intentionally delayed by the Soviet Union until they could enter the war and claim their territorial rewards for international Communism.

On August 6, 1945 the first atomic bomb was dropped over Hiroshima. At Washington the White House announced that it was an atomic bomb and that if the Japanese "do not now accept our terms, they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth." President Truman also stated, "we have used it to shorten the agony of war, in order to save the lives of thousands and thousands of young Americans." Since there was no response from Japan, a second bomb was dropped over Nagasaki three days later only hours after massive Soviet forces had rushed across the border to occupy Manchuria. Still the stalemate between the militarists and the peace faction in Japan was not changed until Hirohito broke the deadlock for peace. Then, after all, the United States compromised on the retention of the Emperor. Finally and mercifully on September 2, 1945 on board the battleship *USS Missouri*, General MacArthur signed the surrender documents and said, "Let us pray that peace be now restored to the world and that God will preserve it always."

Any account of the war with Japan would be incomplete without reference to the brutality and barbarism inflicted by the Japanese upon enemy soldiers and

civilians throughout Southeast Asia. It is well documented that in their war with China, before and during World War II, hundreds of thousands of the Chinese were slaughtered, raped and massacred by Japanese soldiers. As a result of the infamous Death March of Bataan, and such movies as the *The Bridge Over the River Kwai*, and innumerable books on World War II including the current *The Rape of Nanking*, we know much about the brutal treatment and murder of American and British soldiers and civilians as prisoners and laborers which has been well documented. But what is not so well-known concerns the Japanese production of biological weapons and their effort to produce an atomic bomb during World War II

At Harbin, China an infamous Japanese laboratory with 26 affiliates had manufactured germ bombs which, according to a recent newspaper account, were "dropped on Chinese villages killing an estimated 270,000 people." Experiments had been conducted on a wide scale by graduates of Japan's leading medical schools using "human guinea pigs." There was even a plan to drop germ bombs on the United States using balloons, after some balloons had been launched with explosives, a few of which actually landed harmlessly in California. But even more importantly, at the end of the war, the results of Japan's efforts to build an atomic bomb were found in Tokyo and destroyed by the American military. Had either the Japanese or the Germans been successful with their atomic programs before the end of the war, the consequences would have been much too horrible to even imagine.

As has been the case throughout history, the war with Japan was the outright result of armed aggression unrestrained by international law. Before the war, the Japanese had witnessed the economic and material resources acquired by the establishment of British, French and Dutch possession and control of many of the peoples of Southeast Asia. It had also seen the quick defeat and conquest of much of Europe by Adolf Hitler's massive Nazi forces. In fact, it appeared almost certain that the German aggressors would soon triumph over the Soviet Union and occupy areas of Asia which, of itself, presented a threat to the availability of resources coveted by Japan. Since Japan had already been at war with China, these conditions appeared to be an opportunity which the government and people of Japan could not resist. Under such circumstances, the Pacific war appears

to have been inevitable regardless of what the United States and Great Britain might have done about it.

In many ways the consequences of the war with Japan were as cataclysmic as was the war with Germany. Clearly, Germany would have defeated the Soviet Union and won all of Europe had not the Russian forces in the East been released to save Moscow when the Japanese decided to attack the countries of Southeast Asia. And the entry of the Soviets into the war with Japan just before its end had led to the communization of much of Asia. While it is estimated that 15 million or more human beings were killed in the long and tragic Pacific struggle, many millions more lost their lives in the conflicts with Communism after the war. Although the war with Japan succeeded in denying its aggressive possession of much of Southeast Asia, and it undeniably brought about the end of foreign imperialism in the area as well, it's postwar political consequences opened the opportunities for aggressive Communism to overcome China and to cause two additional deadly and disastrous conflicts for the United States in Korea and Vietnam. Finally, after almost fifty years of a highly costly and wasteful Cold War after which Communism collapsed in the Soviet Union, it continued its totalitarian domination over the people of China, North Korea, Viet-Nam and Cuba. Lastly and most unfortunately, instead of a "new world order," the prospect of peace in the new millenium appears to be even more remote than ever in the ever-present threat of horrible new weapons of mass destruction by nuclear, chemical, biological war or terrorism.

CONCLUSION

British author Len Deighton has said that "one good reason for looking again at the Second World War is to remind ourselves how badly the world leaders performed and how bravely they were supported by their suffering populations." Surely certain important conclusions about World War II cannot be ignored and must be remembered. For if an even more devastating calamity is to be avoided in the future, it is imperative that the enforcement of collective international law must insure that nations cannot continue to violate the political independence and territorial integrity of other nations by means of armed aggression and military interference without condemnation and preventive reprisal by the international community of nations. Then, and only then, when international law and collective enforcement prevail, can catastrophes even more horrible than those of the past be prevented.

Never again can mankind permit a Hitler and a Stalin, a Wilson and Clemenceau, nor even a Roosevelt and a Churchill, to personally manipulate such cataclysmic events which affect the future of all of humanity without an opportunity for those most effected to participate in the determination of their own destiny. The most disastrous circumstances in history occurred in the two world wars when individual national leaders, largely upon their own authority, became the impassioned advocates of unreasonable idealism which was a totally inadequate and inappropriate adversary against the hate, vengeance, brutality and aggressiveness which resulted in the disruption of peace, worldwide warfare, and the death and suffering of untold millions of human beings.

The fundamental lesson of Wilson at Versailles, and Roosevelt at Tehran and Yalta, is that while idealism is essential for the progress of humanity, as historian Barbara Tuchman says, "unless it is pursued with a realistic understanding of the nature of man and of historic circumstances, it becomes folly." While it is the foremost duty of every world leader to seek objective and progressive solutions to the necessity for lawful order and peace for the benefit of all people everywhere,

the leadership of the past failed miserably to adequately utilize negotiation, mediation, adjudication and enforcement under international law for the peaceful resolution of disputes between states. And although ambition for positive progress is essential for effective leadership, unrestrained ego and lust for power has proved to be so overwhelmingly aggressive throughout history that it has been responsible for most of the world's greatest disasters!

It is imperative for the survival of civilization that an effective form of international order be established which is capable of maintaining world peace. The only practical and workable plan for international peace demands the enforcement of world law by an internationally composed and controlled military (police) force which will prevent nationalist or terrorist aggressions. The mass destruction of mankind can not be prevented by poverty-making programs to outarm our potential enemies, nor by unreliable schemes of mutual disarmament. Lasting peace can only become a reality by dedicated and effective efforts by the nations of the world to obtain voluntary political agreements, even if only in the self-interest of their own survival, for the international control of the use of aggressive and destructive armed force and weapons. At last and at great cost, mankind has learned that it is aggressive demagoguery which is responsible for most wars and that the only practical and effective means for lasting world peace involves the enforcement of international law by international cooperation.

There was never a war which was not deemed just by those who started it nor by those against whom it was fought. If people could not so easily be persuaded that wars are righteous, there would be fewer wars. Only when mankind realizes that all wars are unjust, can war be eliminated and world peace be maintained. So we must ask ourselves how much more of the world must be destroyed and how many more hundreds of millions of lives must be tragically sacrificed to the insatiable lust for aggression and domination before world peace is enforced? Now, before it is too late, every possible person throughout the world must demand that wars be shut down now forever!

Fortunately, dramatic progress is at long last taking place in what could be the most promising beginning ever for world peace. The recent overwhelming international approval for a permanent world tribunal for war crimes and the international treaty to abolish land mines are the most important developments in international cooperation since the 1945 founding of the United Nations. This

means that the people of the world are now willing to do whatever may be required to finally put an end to armed conflicts that continue to plague so much of humanity and to waste such a great part of the world's resources. In fact, they are now demanding the mandatory enforcement of international law for the establishment of human rights and the maintenance of world order. Most significantly, it demonstrates that the great majority of human beings throughout the world now recognize that their national sovereignty must be subjected to the application of the rule of international law if civilization is to be saved from a nuclear disaster. It also means that, at last, real progress is being made towards the fulfillment of the visions of Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt for world peace through international cooperation. Consequently, it is now both the opportunity and the responsibility of citizens throughout the world to mobilize maximum moral and political pressure upon the major developed nations of the world, and especially upon the leadership of the United States, which must be convinced that national survival is more important than national sovereignty. Then, and only then, can war be abolished so that world peace may prevail.

So the good news is that the majority of the nations of the world have also demonstrated their support for a Treaty (or Convention) for the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes. In principle, the treaty has been approved by the World Peace Through Law Center in 1967, the International Law Association in 1974, the United Nations in 1982, the American Bar Association in 1984, and the Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Nations in 1989. And as part of the 1990-1999 UN Decade for International Law, the UN has called for action to promote "means and methods for the peaceful settlement of international disputes between states, including resort to and full respect for the International Court of Justice."

Any objective review of World War II must conclude that it is absolute nonsense to claim that war must be avoided under all circumstances, and it is sheer folly to attempt to do so when appeasement will merely provide a threatening armed aggressor with an even greater appetite for endangering the freedom and survival of the innocent. We know now that whenever an aggressor is determined to resort to force to fulfill his ambitions, only the threat of an equal or superior counterforce, backed up by the will to use it, can likely prevent an eventual violent conflict. Unfortunately, wars will continue to be inflicted upon mankind so

long as the aggressors or terrorists believe they can accomplish their intentions without being thwarted or defeated, and in this age of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the appeasement of the aggressor or terrorist can only result in the awesome prospect of even greater catastrophes for mankind.

So this is truly a historic moment—when suddenly and unexpectedly—much hope can be realistically taken for the fulfillment of humanity's greatest and most illusive dream for lasting world peace for all people everywhere. And it is imperative that world leaders must urgently and relentlessly seek and obtain international cooperation to establish and enforce the rule of law for the peaceful settlement of international disputes before it is too late.

For *The Final Word* is that if there is to be a lasting world peace on this earth, we must do what we can now—every one of us—while there is yet time to do so, *for our only choice is—world peace or mass destruction!*

(You can personally help to bring about world peace at www.worldpeacetreaty.org)

Appendix I

WORLD WAR II DEATHS

Country:	UnderArms:	Battle Deaths:	Civilian Deaths:
United States	16 million	292 thousand	6 thousand
United Kingdom	5 million	50 thousand	400 thousand
Soviet Union	12 million	7 million	7 million
France	5 million	200 thousand	400 thousand
Germany	10 million	4 million	600 thousand
Italy	4 million	165 thousand	165 thousand
Japan	10 million	2 million	1 million
China	5 million	2 million	5-10 million

SUMMARY:

Estimated 70 million bore arms.
Estimated 20 million military deaths.
From direct and indirect causes—up to 30 million civilian deaths.
Total estimated deaths in World War II—50 million.

Appendix II

US LEND-LEASE AID IN WORLD WAR II 1941-1945

Provided By:	Provided To:	Type of Aid:	Quantity:
United States	Soviet Union	Aircraft	15,000
		Tanks	7,000
		Jeeps	78,000
		Light trucks	151,000
		2-1/2 Ton Trucks	200,000
		Automobiles	210,000
		Motorcycles	35,000
		Tires	2,000,000
		Locomotives	2,000
		Freight cars	11,000
		Railway rails	40,000
		Telephone cable	956,000 miles
		Field telephones	380,000
		Radio stations	35,000
		Petroleum	3,000,000 tons
		Explosives	350,000
		Winter Boots	3,000,000
		Food	4,478,000 tons
		Metals	1,531,500 tons
		Machine tools	20,000
		Cartridges	991,000,000
		Shells	22,000,000

		Anti-aircraft guns	3,000
		Army cloth	23,000,000 yards
		Ships	104
United States	Great Britain	1/5th of all their military equipment, food, oil and machinery.	

NOTES: (1) Value of aid to the Soviet Union by the US—$11 billion.
(2) Value of aid to Great Britain by the US—$31 billion.
(3) Value of aid to other countries by the US—$8 billion.

Appendix III

ARMAMENTS PRODUCTION
World War II

Country	Item	Quantity
United States	Aircraft	250,000
	Tanks	90,000
United Kingdom	Aircraft	135,000
	Tanks & Amored Vehicles	160,000
Soviet Union	Aircraft	120,000
	Tanks	100,000
	Guns	360,000
	Mortars	300,000
	Shells	700,000,000
	Cartridges	20,000,000,000
Germany	Aircraft	113,000
	Tanks	25,000
Japan	Aircraft	70,000

Production of Naval Construction 1939-1945 (units):

US	UK	Soviets	Germany	Italy	Japan
1,247	871	79	1,158*	43	257**

*1,141 were subs **167 were subs

Merchant Shipping Production 1939-1945 (gross tons):

US	UK	Soviets	Germany	Italy	Japan
34 million	9 million	?	?	470 thousand	4 million

NOTE: US produced 40% of the world's armament production.
40% of the US economy was devoted to war production.
1941 US national budget $13 billion—1945 national budget $78 billion.

Appendix IV

RESOLUTIONS

In support of a

TREATY (CONVENTION) FOR THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES (World Peace Treaty)

World Peace Through Law Center (1967)

International Law Association (1974)

United Nations (1982)

American Bar Association (1989)

Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned States (1989)

UN Decade for International Law (1990-99)

World Peace Treaty Campaign (2000)

Appendix V

Proposed US Senate Resolution

TREATY FOR THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES (World Peace Treaty)

RESOLUTION—Calling on the President to initiate the leadership of the United States in developing and promoting worldwide support for the enactment of a Treaty for the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes as mankind's most practical means for the abolishment of war, the prevention of a nuclear holocaust, and the maintenance and preservation of world peace.

RESOLVED by the United States Senate assembled:

Sec. 1. FINDINGS.

The Senate finds the following:

(1) The United Nations was founded on the principle that all States shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace, security and justice are not endangered.

(2) After more than fifty years the basic requisites for world peace have not been attained by disarmament, jurisdiction of international courts, nor the development and enforcement of international law.

(3) The UN Charter provides sufficient means for the pacific settlement of disputes through existing non-judicial procedures—negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation and arbitration. While the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Court of Arbitration have been accorded the jurisdiction to adjudicate any question of international law, yet these instruments and institutions have not been granted the manda-

tory power and means to enforce the maintenance of international peace and security.

(4) With the enactment of the European Convention (Treaty) for the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes in 1957, the signatories agreed to submit to the International Court of Justice all international legal disputes which might arise between them. For over forty years the convention has effectively enforced the maintenance of peaceful relations between the European signatories.

(5) Proposals for a Treaty (or Convention) for the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes have been approved by the World Peace Through Law Center in 1967, the International Law Association in 1974, the United Nations in 1982, the American Bar Association in 1989, and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned States in 1989. In 1996, referring to the final term of the Decade for International Law (1990-1999), the United Nations called for action to promote the "means and methods for the peaceful settlement of international disputes between States, including resort to and full respect for the International Court of Justice."

(6) The 1998 approval by 120 nations of the treaty for a permanent International Court for War Crimes and the March 1, 1999 enactment of the Treaty to Ban Land Mines confirms that the overwhelming majority of the people of the world urgently demand the establishment and the mandatory enforcement of international law to prevent the utilization of armed aggression, mass destruction, and terrorism as a means of resolving international disputes between states.

(7) Treaties (conventions) for the peaceful settlement of international disputes have been drafted by committees of the American Bar Association, the Sixth Committee of the United Nations, and by the International Rule of Law Institute at The National Law Center in Washington, D.C.

Sec. II. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

It is the sense of the Senate that the President should demonstrate the leadership of the United States and fully utilize all appropriate resources and relations of the United States government to support and promote the international enact-

ment of a Treaty for the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes including resort to and full respect for the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

(Proposed by the World Peace Treaty Campaign
WPTreaty@cs.com
www.worldpeacetreaty.org)

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